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**RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.**

For the Christian Observer.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE REV. DAVID BROWN, LATE SENIOR CHAPLAIN OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY, AND PROVOST OF THE COLLEGE OF FORT WILLIAM.

**T**HIS account is taken from a very interesting work, which has recently been published by Cadell and Davies, entitled, "Memorial Sketches of the Rev. David Brown, with a Selection of his Sermons preached at Calcutta." The work is edited by the Rev. Charles Simeon, of Cambridge, who had been amongst the earliest friends of Mr. Brown; and I unite with that distinguished minister of Jesus Christ, in the hope that it may tend to kindle in the hearts of many, not only a respect for the memory of Mr. Brown, but an ardent solicitude to follow his steps.

The Rev. David Brown was born in the East Riding of Yorkshire, where his venerable parents, still living, and his brothers, reside. The exact time of his birth is not mentioned; but it must have been in the latter months of 1763, or the first months of the following year. From his early youth he was distinguished for a religious turn of mind, an amiable disposition, and a thirst for knowledge. When about ten or eleven years of age, being on a journey with his parents, he fell into the company of a minister, who, though a stranger, was so much struck with his intelligence, that he offered to take charge of him for a year or two, in order to prepare him for a grammar-school, with a view of his finally entering

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the church. His parents were induced to acquiesce in the proposal. Young Brown resided for some time, under the tuition of his new friend, at Scarborough. He was afterwards removed to the grammar-school at Hull, then under the care of the Rev. Joseph Milner. Mr. Milner became much attached to his pupil; and while that good man lived, Mr. Brown continued to consult the judgment and confide in the experience and piety of his tutor. Mr. Brown proceeded to the University of Cambridge, and was entered at Magdalen College, where he prosecuted the usual studies preparatory to his entering into the church.

Mr. Brown had been piously educated. The following allusion to this circumstance was found among his papers after his decease:—"Thy goodness, like the sun, dawned on my early days:—a godly grandfather, who poured out prayers for me;—parents who attended to the instructions given them by the ministers of God;—early acquaintance with the Rev. Messrs. Jesse, Stillingfleet, Milner;—mercies all flowing from my God!" What a strong encouragement does the case of Mr. Brown hold out to parents, not only to be assiduous in forming the minds of their children, from earliest infancy, to the fear and love of God; but to provide for them, as far as possible, such friends and associates as may promote their religious progress!

During Mr. Brown's residence at college, he was led, in the course of his correspondence with a pious

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friend in London, to relate some successful efforts he had made to do good among the poor. This letter having been shewn to an officer in the East India Company's service, a new direction was given to all his prospects in life. In the month of February, 1785, he was invited by this officer, Major Mitchell, to undertake the task of superintending an institution recently formed in Bengal, for the support and education of the orphans, of both sexes, belonging to the indigent deceased Europeans of that presidency. He was at first disinclined to listen to this proposal, deeming it his duty to pursue his academical studies to their natural termination; but the friends whom he consulted being of a contrary opinion, he yielded to their judgment, and agreed to accept the situation that had been offered to him, provided he could obtain episcopal ordination. Here, however, a new difficulty arose. Dr. Lowth, then Bishop of London, gave a peremptory refusal to his application, alleging, that he had already ordained several men for the colonies, who afterwards remained lounging about town, a disgrace to the clerical profession. On this repulse, Major Mitchell applied to the late Bishop of Llandaff, Dr. Watson, who agreed, that if the Archbishop of Canterbury saw no impropriety in his ordaining Mr. Brown, after what had passed, he would cheerfully do it. The Archbishop approved of the proceeding, and Mr. Brown was ordained by the Bishop of Llandaff on the 26th of February, 1785. The Bishop shewed him much pastoral regard: he had himself conducted a long and close examination of Mr. Brown, and he gave him much valuable counsel, which proved afterwards a comfort and support to him. His Lordship's last words were; "Go in peace, and may the blessing of God go with you! Do all the good you can; and if it is

no better for you in this world, it will be in the world to come."

The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge elected Mr. Brown a corresponding member, gave him books, and recommended him to the Court of Directors of the East India Company, who, with great liberality, advanced 300 guineas for his outfit. He did not leave England until the month of November following. The interval appears, from his journal, to have been passed partly among his friends in Yorkshire, but chiefly in London. During this time the frame of his mind appears to have been that of devotedness to God's service, and resignation to his will. Before the East India Company had resolved to make him an advance, he experienced much pecuniary inconvenience. On one occasion he observes; "My duties this day have been, preaching two sermons, reading prayers three times, a funeral, a churching, and a christening. Major ——— this morning came to church, and begged me to make use of a ten-pound note as long as I wished. I had but two shillings remaining, which I left this evening with a poor soldier whose wife lay-in of twins, which last Sunday I baptized. My God, continue to help me to serve thee, and follow me this day and every day with thy blessing!"

From an incidental expression in his journal, Mr. Brown appears to have been married about this time; a circumstance which, probably, added to his pecuniary difficulties. "I am now," he says, "to reside in Chelsea, and have very little money and food to provide for my wife and self. The Lord will provide. Of this he has given me a precious token this evening; for unexpectedly were sent in various supplies."

The friends whose regard he seems at this time to have cherished with the greatest affection, were Mr. Simeon, the Messrs. Lloyds, of King's College, Cambridge, and Mr.



Houseman. Mr. Simeon accompanied him to the ship in which he embarked for India, on the 15th of Nov. 1785, with Mrs. Brown, who was delivered on board, of a son, on the first of February. The journal of his voyage exhibits the same deep piety which was visible in his former memoranda, and contains many interesting details. The following incident is selected merely because it marks that union of firmness and suavity which was characteristic of Mr. Brown's mind.

"Feb. 25, 1786. The evening of the day was remarkable for a debate, in which my sentiments respecting song-singing, drinking to excess, &c. were brought to the test. After a glass of claret, I declined taking more, when the captain forcibly urged me, and would have taken my glass and filled it: but with a determined air I told him, he might as easily attempt to shake Gibraltar as to shake me from my purpose. It was replied, 'Then you must sing.' I told them I considered it as inconsistent with my character, and I could not oblige them by a violation of my judgment. This was followed by arguments on the necessity of being good company, of the innocence of festivity, &c. The Captain observed, that we ought to accommodate ourselves to the spirit of the company we sit down with, and that it was only good breeding and harmless to do so. I replied, that I was a great advocate for liberty; that I gave large scope to others to follow their own judgments, and that I valued myself on this prerogative: I had opinions that I could not part with to oblige any company whatever;—that a man must be dastardly and unprincipled who would, to please others, act contrary to his judgment, and thus give up the most precious right of human nature;—that as to the innocence of song-singing, I would not hesitate to affirm, that some songs were really criminal, and by no rules of morality to be justified, and that to me all

seemed improper and inconsistent. I added, that it was contrary to good sense as well as good breeding, to press a person after such a declaration; and that I did not doubt but the present company would have as contemptible an opinion of me as I deserved, should I comply; and concluded by saying to the Captain, that I did not believe it would give him any satisfaction to hurt my feelings, but that I should disoblige him by granting what they had asked. To this he made a short and proper answer—that I should never more be pressed to do any thing disagreeable or contrary to my judgment, so long as I was in his ship. Mrs. — reddened, and could not conceal the ebullition of passion excited by my serious harangue. She affirmed, that she knew a clergyman, the best of men, whose respectable character none need blush to copy, who would sing a lively or jolly song and think no harm. I objected to any man's opinion or conduct being a rule of action for me: there were clergymen capable of doing things that debased their character, and sunk them beneath their dignity. She made another pass at me before she desisted: 'People will never think worse of you for singing a cheerful song, and being gay a little.' I answered, that my aim was not the opinion of others: I referred my conduct to a higher law than the law of reputation. The conversation ended amicably, and in my complete enfranchisement."

The ship reached Madras Roads on the 27th of May, when Mr. Brown learnt the afflicting news of the loss of the Halsewell Indiaman, in which he had intended to sail in preference to every other: he had even actually applied to Captain Pierce for a passage. "Alas!" he observes, "how blind is man! Let us be content, with St. Peter, to be well assured that the hidden things of the providence of God we shall know hereafter. Our defect in foreknowledge is more than amply provided for in

the knowledge, wisdom, and goodness of God. O that I may hang on him as a son on his father, and forget my cares and dangers in the abiding consciousness of his ever-watchful protection !”

On the 8th of June, 1786, Mr. Brown landed at Calcutta, where he met with a kind reception from the Rev. John Owen, now the Chaplain-General of our naval and military forces ; from Mr. Charles Grant ; and Mr. Chambers. He took up his abode at the Orphan Establishment ; and a few days after his arrival, he received a farther appointment as one of the chaplains of the Company. On entering on the charge of the Orphan Establishment, he prays, “ May these souls committed to my care be led to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and be instructed in all right things, to the praise and glory of God ! O Lord, my joy will be to see them trained in the way they should go ; but give them thy Spirit, which alone can direct and keep them in right paths.”

Mr. Brown had not been in Calcutta above a month before he began his efforts for a mission to the natives. He had been diligently preparing himself for this while on board ship, by a study of one or two of the oriental languages ; and we find him devoting a part of his time at Calcutta, to the acquisition of Bengalee, and expressing his hope (December 3, 1786) that the Lord would enable him to acquire this language, that he might “ translate the Scriptures of truth for the benefit of the poor benighted heathen of this land.” His letters during the year 1787, as well as his journal, evince much anxiety on this head. “ I am beginning,” he says, “ a native school of young Hindoos, who will not only be my scholars but my family and property.” “ This I consider as the first seed of Christianity sown on the native soil of Bengal.” He drew up a memoir on the subject, “ entitled a Proposal for estab-

lishing a Protestant Mission in Bengal and Bahar,” which was forwarded to England.

In this Memoir, which is framed with singular wisdom, while it manifests an ardent zeal in the cause he had espoused, he recommended the measure of translating the Scriptures into the different languages of the East, and the sending forth of missionaries to instruct the natives—“ fit men, of free minds, disinterested, zealous, and patient of labour, who would aspire to the arduous office of a missionary.” After assigning his reasons for desiring to have young clergymen of the Church of England, he adds : “ But genuine piety is the grand requisite in a missionary. His work must be his business, his delight, and reward. Whoever is greedy of gain and seeks great things for himself, whoever prefers a life of ease and competence to a life of toil with an humble subsistence, is not fit for the purpose. But men who are ready to endure hardship, and to suffer the loss of all things ; who count not their own lives dear to them, and who are willing to do and suffer for the sake of the Gospel : these are the men who are wanted ; these are the true missionaries to instruct the heathen successfully in the way of salvation.”

This Memoir was presented to the East India Company ; and Mr. Brown, at the same time, addressed letters to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Llandaff, Mr. Wilberforce, and other distinguished characters in this country, urging them to use their utmost efforts to draw the public attention to this object, and to gain for it the sanction of government. Thus, as Mr. Simeon justly observes, long before the great Missionary Societies, or the Bible Society, had been thought of, did this honoured servant of Christ, in conjunction with his two friends Mr. Grant and Mr. Chambers, urge, with great force and energy, the claims of the natives on our Government, and



the duty of imparting to them the blessings of civil and religious light. But the zeal and earnestness which have since been called into action had not yet been kindled, and Mr. Brown's efforts proved for a time fruitless. He lived, however, to witness the dawn of a brighter day.

In the year 1766, the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge endeavoured to form a mission at Calcutta, and sent thither for that purpose the Rev. Mr. Kiernander, who had resided for some time as a missionary on the Coromandel Coast. Mr. Kiernander laboured with considerable assiduity, but with little success, for many years. He erected a church in Calcutta, which continues to be known by the name of the Mission Church, and in which he performed Divine Service. In consequence of this undertaking, and various other disappointments, his circumstances became embarrassed, and his property, being seized by his creditors, was exposed to sale. This happened in the year 1787, soon after Mr. Brown's arrival in India. On this occasion Mr. Grant came forward, with his accustomed liberality, and purchased the Mission Church for 10,000 rupees, with the view of devoting it exclusively to its original object. In October 1787, the property was vested in three Trustees; Mr. Brown, Mr. Chambers and Mr. Grant; Mr. Brown undertaking, in addition to his other duties, to officiate in it. This engagement, however, was not satisfactory to the managers of the Orphan Establishment, who insisted on his either renouncing it or quitting their service. He chose the latter alternative, though it was attended with some pecuniary loss; and in August, 1788, he left the Orphan House.

The Trustees communicated these proceedings to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, sending to them at the same time a copy of the Memoir that had been drawn

up on the subject of a mission to Bengal. The reply of the Society is so creditable to both parties, that I have much pleasure in inserting an extract from it. "I have the pleasure," says Dr. Gaskin, who was then as now the Secretary of this venerable institution, "to inform you, that the contents of your letter were received with much satisfaction, and the part you have acted respecting the concerns of the mission and the Mission Church hath greatly endeared you to the Society." "That you have stepped forward to rescue it from secular uses, and secure it for the sole purposes of religion, is a matter that speaks creditably for you as Englishmen, Christians, and members of our national church. Your act, therefore, is highly approved by the Society; and in the most cordial manner they fall in with your wishes of sending out a new missionary to carry on the sacred purposes they have all along had in view in Calcutta." "The proposal for establishing a mission on a more extensive scale, in Bengal and Bahar, which you were so good as to transmit to my hands, has been listened to by the Mission Committee and the General Board with peculiar satisfaction. They approve its plan, and admire the judgment and piety with which it has been drawn up, and only lament that it is not in their power to give full effect to your wishes." The hope, however, may be encouraged that the time is shortly coming when efforts for introducing the knowledge of Christ throughout your parts of India may generally take place; and whereinsoever the Society can be aiding to forward such designs they will not be found wanting."

Mr. Brown's life at this period, as well as during the whole of his remaining course, was one of considerable labour. While he retained the superintendence of the Orphan Establishment, he was zealous

lous and indefatigable in the discharge of its duties. Besides being chaplain to a brigade in Fort William, he voluntarily undertook, with the approbation of his brother chaplains, the charge of the Mission Church; officiating at each of these points in succession every Sunday. On separating from the Orphan Institution, he received private pupils into his house, and this domestic school was much in request. He paid great attention at the same time to the Free-school of Calcutta, and statedly visited the hospital and gaol, in order to impart religious instruction to the inmates of these places. At the gaol, he was blessed with remarkable success, as indeed he had been in England, in his endeavours to awaken convicts to a sense of their sins, and to bring them to unfeigned repentance. Besides all this, he continued to apply himself assiduously to the acquisition of the native languages, with a view to his being eventually serviceable in translating the Scriptures. His studies in this line, however, were greatly impeded by the necessary attention he was forced to pay to the increasing duties of his ministerial office, and at length gave place to more successful labourers in the same field.

The following extracts from his journal will shew the devout and pious frame of his mind at this period:—"My anxiety and grief for the mission still continue upon my mind. Nothing remains for me but prayer to the Lord, that he will please to raise up men whose zeal shall never abate of its fervour, and whose exertions shall be unwearied in carrying on so great a work. I hope I may be permitted to say thus much, that I feel disposed to labour wheresoever the Lord shall open a door. My chief delight is, to meditate on and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ; and I would this were my only employment, but that the wish is selfish and shews me to be too fond of

happy moments. I think I am now where God would have me to be: may I be found faithful in his service!" "My soul thirsteth after a better country, where the inhabitants follow righteousness, peace, and love, and where Jesus walketh in the midst, conversing as a friend face to face. The company of heaven is a most delightful meditation! My friends will there appear in perfect beauty, and the Redeemer himself in the midst, the King of Glory! Oh, my Saviour, what earthly prince can do thus for his best friends? Thou art worthy of all my love, talents, strength, and time. Lord, help me to devote all these fully to thee alone." "O for the spirit of a Brainerd or a Howard, on whom I have been thinking and conversing this day!"

(To be continued.)

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To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THOUGH the character of "*a plain man*" may suit well enough with the common affairs of life, it carries but little value with it in religious controversy, unless it is united with the character also of *a well-informed man*. I have been led to make this remark by observing in your Miscellany for November last, p. 698, a communication on the *baptismal controversy* from a writer signing himself Q. C.

Q. C. represents himself as having made, and being astonished with, the discovery of "an important fact," which seems to him so clear and decisive that "it defies all the efforts of the most torturing criticism to wrest it from its obvious and natural application."—I imagine the surprise of this writer might have expanded itself through a wider space than that of the arena occupied at present by those "acute disputants on the baptismal controversy" he speaks of, as I am not aware of any commentator, either of early or later date, having made the discovery which Q. C. has; or that it was ever supposed, by any one who



duly considered the passage in question (Acts viii. 14—16,) that it had the remotest connection with the subject of the baptismal controversy, much less the "*direct bearing*" upon it which he assumes. Any *seeming bearing* lies merely in the *sound* of the words, which are as follows:—"When the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost: *for as yet he was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*" Hence Q. C. would argue, that the *receiving of the Spirit*, and the *baptism in the name of Christ*, are clearly separated, and two distinct things; the one, as we here see, happening some time after the other: therefore the point now so warmly disputed is at once settled beyond a doubt.

Now, Sir, surely Q. C. cannot be so "plain a man," or so little conversant with scripture facts and doctrines, as to suppose that the persons here spoken of, and of whom it is said, in verse 12, that "when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women;" that these, I say, notwithstanding, continued in their unconverted state, as before, and strangers to the grace of God, till the subsequent arrival of Peter and John. For, if so, then how little reason, alas! had the Ethiopian Eunuch to go "on his way rejoicing," if his baptism, which he received at Philip's hands, was thus inefficacious! To admit such an hypothesis as that Q. C. seems to entertain, is, indeed (to use his own expression), "*torturing criticism*," and such as this passage will certainly, I think, continue to *defy*.

It will not displease this writer, probably, to be referred to the re-

spectable father of one of those "acute disputants" he mentions, and to learn what he says on the above passage in his Commentary. I turn to him with the greater readiness, presuming that Q. C. will not suspect this author of any undue bias on the point at issue. In his note on Acts viii. 14—17, Mr. Scott says:—"When they (Peter and John) came to the city, and *saw the effects* of Philip's ministry, they by prayer and imposition of hands obtained for the converts the Holy Ghost; *that is*, HIS MIRACULOUS GIFTS AND OPERATIONS: for though, as believers, *they partook of his regenerating, sanctifying, and comforting influences*, yet they had not before been favoured with his EXTRAORDINARY COMMUNICATIONS." The *regenerating influences*, here admitted to have been received before, were received at—*what time*, then? Certainly, when these converts *believed and were baptized*, as appears plain from the words before cited. In this passage then, so triumphantly brought forward, we find mention of *baptism*, *apparently* as if distinct from the *reception of the Spirit*, but in reality including, without a doubt, *all the ordinary spiritual blessings generally annexed* to it. What afterwards took place was the pouring out of those additional EXTRAORDINARY AND SPECIAL GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST, which were only *imparted through the instrumentality of apostolic hands*. It is evident, says Dr. Doddridge, "that here were EXTRAORDINARY GIFTS evidently conferred BY EXTRAORDINARY OFFICERS."

I might add many more to these testimonies; but I will only lay before Q. C. the words of one, the learned and lucid Estius, as setting the sense of the passage in a clear and perfect light. He says:—"Acceperant quidem in baptismo Spiritum Sanctum ad sanctificationem, quia renati erant ex Spiritu Sancto: in cujus rei typum super

Christum in Jordane baptizatum descendit in specie Columbæ Spiritus Sanctus. *Sed non acceperant ad robur quomodo acceperant Apostoli in die Pentecostes.*" Where he evidently means the EXTRAORDINARY GIFTS of the Spirit.

These two or three quotations, from authors differing in time and denomination, and of deserved celebrity, may serve to give light to "a plain man," and to shew Q. C. that the meaning of Scripture is not to be gained by a mere glimpse at the surface, but by much candid attention, careful consideration, and "with an honest and good heart."

Bringing these qualifications, as well as that of *plainness*, to the examination of the *baptismal controversy*, I trust he will perceive and admit that baptism, in every instance when it is "rightly and duly administered,"\* is, according to the sound words of our excellent Church Catechism, "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness; for being by nature born in sin, the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace." I am, &c. OLD CHURCH.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

MANY have been the papers which have appeared in your publication on the baptismal controversy; and whether or no I ought to consider the following a supernumerary, my decision will await the arrival of your next number.

"I am a plain man, and have always considered a single fact, well authenticated and of direct bearing upon the subject, to be more conclusive than all the abstract reasoning in the world," and also that it looks defiance upon an ocean of abstract reasons assailing it. But the single plain fact, chosen by your correspondent Q. C.† (for that there is choice afforded us I shall endea-

\* Q. Received.

† Number for Nov. last, p. 698.

your presently to shew) does not appear to me to be of direct bearing upon the subject, in the light, at least, in which I conceive he views it. For might it not be objected, that they are the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit here mentioned (Acts viii. 16.?) Which supposition will be almost, if not certainly, confirmed by a similar case, related Acts xix. 4—7; where the disciples at Ephesus are said to have believed and been baptized, and that, St. Paul having laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost fell upon them, and they spake with tongues. Now, this being the case, the people of Samaria might, notwithstanding, have received that communication of the Spirit which alone, in these days, we are authorized to expect. And we may fairly conclude they must have done so; for it is said (chap. viii. 12,) that they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. Now it would be unwarrantable to suppose that the faith of all of them was as unsound as that of Simon Magus; and, if sound, they could not but have received the gift of the Holy Spirit (Eph. ii. 8.) The circumstance, indeed, of Peter and John being sent down to impart spiritual gifts, is an evidence that their profession, time having now been allowed for its trial, was sincere; and it would seem to have been so ordered by God, in whose sight his heart was not right, that Simon Magus should not partake of this benefit; the method which he afterwards took to obtain it, upon finding himself excluded, fully discovering that he was yet "in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity." I would infer, therefore, that neither the one nor the other communication accompanied baptism; for it is said that they believed, and were *then* baptized. And in this view of it, the fact will indeed be irresistible.



Should we wish for other facts to the same purport, we have not far to look. In the eighth chapter we have recorded also the case of the Eunuch, to whom Philip having preached Jesus, and he having expressed a desire to be baptized, "Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God." Now faith, we know, is the gift of God; and, moreover, that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord except by the Holy Ghost. The Eunuch, therefore, was regenerated; and no person will maintain that he was a second time regenerated in his baptism.

The case of Cornelius (Acts x.) is perhaps stronger. "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."

Once more: if circumcision be considered a type of baptism, St. Paul will supply us with an unequivocal definition of the latter, which exactly accords with the above-mentioned instances. Rom. iv. 11: "And he (Abraham) received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith *which he had yet being uncircumcised.*"

"These facts commend themselves to every man's conscience with irresistible influence, and defy all the efforts of the most torturing criticism to wrest them from their obvious and natural application."

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For the Christian Observer.

#### ON WORLDLY CONFORMITY.

To many *Christians* even, this command of the Apostle will appear a hard saying. It is not at first view evident how a man can live in society, engage in the business of life, and yet do nothing, in word or deed, except what he considers himself as doing according to the will of God. By some persons, ignorant of Christianity, who consider it as something scarcely admitting of definition, but, at all events, requiring those who subject themselves to its laws to be totally different from those around them, the Christian character has been always viewed as something extremely gloomy and unsocial. That a man may obey the whole Moral Law, they can easily conceive. It may even be admitted by many, that he may thus be a much better member of society, and in every respect a more amiable character. But when the peculiar demands of Christianity are represented to them, and those parts of it which can be only spiritually discerned come under their consideration; when they hear the command, "Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth;" when they are required to abandon "father and mother, houses and lands, for Christ's sake and the Gospel's;" when they are forbidden to be anxious concerning "what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed;" they are apt to exclaim, "How can these things be? How can we obey so hard and austere a Master?"

But there is nothing inconsistent in the idea of keeping one's-self unspotted from the world, and yet living in the world. It is perfectly possible "to use the world as not abusing it;" to enjoy the innocent pleasures and all the comforts which our situation affords, without being conformed to the world in its affections and lusts, without so loving it as to shew that the love of the Father is not in us.

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How far a Christian may go in conformity to the world, is a question about which few are disposed to give their own minds a precise answer; because the Bible, which alone can direct them on this point, would probably declare against some of what they would call their innocent amusements and just gains.

It is certain, that no Christian is forbidden to use lawful means to promote his worldly prosperity and comfort. He may even devote the greater part of his time to this purpose; for the Scriptures, far from containing any thing to check laudable industry, and the use of means whereby a man may render himself respectable and happy as to outward circumstances, expressly command him to "provide for his own, and those of his own house." Now this implies considerable intercourse with the world; so much, at least, as to prove the absurdity of *their* notions who would have men wholly to seclude themselves from it; or who, taking most unwarrantable liberties with Scripture, would intermit all exertion to procure food and raiment, because they are told to trust to Him who feedeth the ravens when they cry, who clotheth the lilies of the field, and will, to the better blessings he gives his people, add all these things, because he knoweth they have need of them. Exhortations against loving the world were not intended to produce a neglect of worldly business, but to prevent the world from occupying the place of God in the heart; and to teach us the absolute necessity of making even our worldly occupations subordinate and subservient to the great ends of our being—the glorifying of God on earth, and the enjoyment of him in heaven.

But men are now not much disposed to go to excess in obeying the precepts of the Gospel; nor is this an age in which there is great danger

of being righteous over much. Christians are more apt to run into the opposite extreme: to accommodate the principles of religion to their own corruptions; to encourage themselves in a criminal laxity of conduct, by convenient interpretations of Scripture; sometimes, indeed, under pretence of enjoying that liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free. Too often is the attempt made to reconcile, what the Spirit of God has declared to be impracticable, the service of the prince of this world, with His service who is a jealous God, and who saith to the man who would please him, "My son, give me thine heart."

Abstinence from gross offences is by no means rare or difficult; and infidels may, as far as respects the outward appearance, bear as fair a character as the professing disciples of Christ. If those who call themselves his followers, who profess to be spiritually minded, pursue the world with as much avidity as others, and become so immersed in worldly business that God is but little in their thoughts; though they may be perfectly honourable in their dealings, and in every respect merit the common appellation of good men, what are they more than others? Do not even the publicans the same? Do not the Gentiles thus seek after all these things?

It too often happens that the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and render many unfruitful. But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, faith, patience.

Again: "The innocent pleasures of life" is a phrase which we hear on all hands; but there are few terms, in such common use, which people are so unwilling or unable to define. When used by Christians, however, it is obvious that it should have a very different acceptation from that in which it is understood by the men



of the world, in whose mouths it may generally be considered as signifying something not so contrary to all decency and good principles as the ordinary course of their conduct. What are thus called innocent amusements may indeed, perhaps, be so in themselves; but the manner in which they are abused, the preference which is frequently given them over the most important duties, the errors and fatal consequences to which they have sometimes served as the first step, have generally rendered them suspected in the eyes of the more serious part of mankind.

There should certainly, in this respect, be a distinction between the children of God and the world lying in wickedness; and perhaps one way in which Christians ought to confess their Saviour, in these days, before men, is by abstaining from some indulgences which, though no direct criminality may attach to them abstractedly considered, yet, from circumstances, prove hostile to consistency of character, and tend therefore to bring reproach upon religion. Let the world revile and hate us, if they please, for this separation: they hated Him whom we serve before they hated us; as in his case too, they will hate us without a cause.

The boundary of what is innocent is often so indistinct, and may so easily be passed when we approach it, that it is better to keep from its verge. It is better to be thought rigid and over scrupulous, than that others should be encouraged in sin by our example; and that, on account of our conduct, the Sacred Name which we bear should be blasphemed. It surely does not become him for whom Christ died, who should always have before his eyes the value of time, the important purposes for which he was sent into being, and, above all, the realities of eternity, to be immersed in the fleeting vanities of those whose whole life is a vain show. These are the

ties which bind men to the world, and thus destroy that happy tone of mind which the Christian sometimes attains by much prayer and self-denial: they give to the tempter a more commanding position, re-kindle new hopes of victory in the powers of darkness, and revive those lusts of the flesh, which had been in a degree vanquished. Let us not thus encourage the enemies of our souls, nor check the heavenward progress of our spirits for the sake of such poor momentary gratifications.

Let us, then, take heed to our ways, and regulate our conduct according to the standard by which our actions will finally be tried in that day when God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.

P. Z.

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FAMILY SERMONS.—No. XCVII.

1 Tim. i. 15.—*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*

AMONG the instances of the efficacy of Divine grace, recorded in Scripture, there is none more decisive than that of St. Paul. With the ardour of youth he had associated some of the worst of human passions; and notwithstanding his zeal for God, he was "a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious," a man of violence and blood. If we follow him in his Christian course, we find the lion converted into a lamb. He was bold indeed; but his was the courage not of persecution, but of suffering. He now went from city to city, not to drag the followers of Jesus to prison and to death, but to preach the very Name he had blasphemed, and the Gospel he had so fiercely laboured to destroy. He was himself astonished at the change; and in the overflowing of his gratitude to the Saviour who had called

him from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, he can scarcely find words to express the feelings of his heart. While writing under these impressions to Timothy, and declaring the exceeding abundance of the grace of our Lord, as displayed in his own person, he breaks out into a more general strain, and is led to magnify the love and mercy of God in the offer of salvation to all men: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

In this passage we are led to consider *the mission of Christ, and its claim to our attention.*

I. The mission of Christ includes two particulars; his appearance in the world, and the end for which he appeared.

1. The expression is remarkable—"Christ Jesus *came* into the world." We read, in other parts of Scripture, that "he was born of a woman, made under the law;"—"the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;"—"he took not upon him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham;" with many other phrases of a like kind. Now in all these phrases there is something very peculiar. We do not say of Moses, or St. Paul, or St. John, or of any mortal, however high his rank or attainments, however holy his character or dignified his commission, that he came into the world, was made of a woman, was made flesh, &c. We cannot but feel that this mode of speech implies something extraordinary in the person to whom it is applied. It is proper only as applied to a superior being, and not to a mere man. Jesus Christ came into the world, not as his proper place of residence, but as the inhabitant of another country. He took our nature, not as belonging to himself, but as foreign to his own. This was in him an act of humiliation, of condescension. He veiled the majesty of a higher nature in this taberna-

cle of flesh.—I notice this merely to shew that the inspired writers do indirectly, as well as directly, bear witness to the exalted nature of the *person* of Christ. It is not in this case the dignity of office or of character, but of *person*; and this we cannot deny without doing violence to the plain forms of common language.

2. The end for which Christ appeared was "to save sinners."—Those who are contented with the plain meaning of the word of God, will feel no doubt upon this point. He came not merely to vindicate the honour of his Father's law; or to do away the peculiarities of the Jewish system, as little suited to mankind in general; or to set before us an example of obedience and virtue: he had still nobler ends; he came "to save sinners." It was for us men, and for our salvation, that he left the glories of his throne, and visited the earth in great humility. It was to redeem us from sin and all its dreadful consequences, and to raise us to the blessedness of heaven, that he became man, and lived, and laboured, and died.

And here an important question arises: In what way does the mission of Christ avail to our salvation? That he came to deliver us from the wrath of God, and from the awful punishment denounced against sin, is readily admitted. But who are the persons to be saved? Do the blessings of salvation extend to all who have sinned, or only to a part of mankind? What saith the Scripture? "*Believe* in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved:" "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." The promise, then, is made to those that believe, and it is made to them alone: "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."

We see, then, how inexpressibly



important it is that we should believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.—But here again there is danger of mistake. What is meant by thus believing? If it means nothing more than an admission of the truth of the general statements of Scripture—a belief that the Son of God had actually come into the world to save us from the curse of the law—such a faith would be consistent with any mode of life, however wicked: it would be a principle without power or efficiency; it could not cleanse the heart from sin, or produce those views and affections which distinguish the disciples of Christ, and fit them for heaven. He who believes to the salvation of his soul, feels that he needs a Saviour: he perceives that he has sinned against a holy God, from whose wrath he can have no refuge but in the merits of his Redeemer: he discovers and welcomes in Jesus Christ the physician of his wounded spirit: he listens with gladness to the invitations and promises of his word: he relies with entire confidence on his mercy and grace. In looking to the cross of Christ, he beholds not merely the atonement which was made for the sins of the world, but the Victim which was offered for himself. “On him has *my* iniquity been laid, and by his stripes must I be healed.” Such is the language of faith: it brings us to the Fountain which has been opened for sin and uncleanness; and appropriates to the soul all the benefits which Christ hath purchased by his blood. Faith is not, therefore, a speculative notion, but an active and powerful principle, which, by the grace of God, gives a new impulse to our hearts, and a new character to our lives. Faith of this description must of necessity produce fruits meet for repentance, and a life formed on the precepts of the Gospel. A barren faith is the faith of devils: it has none of the characters of the faith that justifies the sinner. Those who believe in

Jesus, according to the scriptural meaning of that expression, “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit:” their whole conduct must be consistent with the principles they profess: their fruit is unto holiness, and the end is everlasting life.

It deserves remark, that the Apostle derives pleasure from the universal manifestation of the love of Christ. He had been speaking of himself; but his large and liberal mind, while stating his own obligations to Divine mercy, rejoices that Jesus Christ came into the world, not for his sake alone, but to save sinners wherever they are to be found. No barriers were now to be raised between the Gentile and the Jew: the partition-wall was broken down. If all had sinned and come short of the glory of God, the voice of mercy was now to be extended to all; and all who would hear and obey that voice, should live. The commission of our Lord to his Apostles required that they should go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. I proceed, then, to consider,

II. The claim it has upon our attention. “It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance.”

1. “It is a faithful saying”—that is, a true saying; a fact resting on evidence which cannot be denied, and which meets us in every page of the Gospel. We find it in the doctrines which were taught, in the mighty works which were done, and in the testimony which was given, in the name and by the authority of God; and if we examine the records of the Old Testament, we have the evidence of patriarchs and prophets; for, even in the remotest ages, they looked forward to Christ and spoke of him. “It is a faithful saying,” as many have witnessed who have passed from the bondage of sin to the freedom of the Gospel, the Spirit itself bearing witness with their spirits that they are the sons of God and heirs of eternal life. Many are

even now able to rejoice in the persuasion that the Redeemer, in whom they have reposed their hope, is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him; and that God, for his sake, is still faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And if we could open the gates of the invisible world, and hold converse with those who dwell in the paradise above, what countless multitudes would bear testimony to this faithful saying! But there is no need that heaven should be emptied of its hosts to establish the veracity of the word of God: if we believe not Moses and the prophets, neither should we be persuaded though one rose from the dead.

2. It is a saying "worthy of all acceptance;" or, as we have it in the version used in the Liturgy, "of all men to be received." On what ground, then, is it to be received? It is worthy to be received both on account of its authority and importance. It rests on the declaration of God. The great end for which the Son of God took upon him the likeness of man, has been revealed to us by Him who is the source of all wisdom, and knowledge, and truth. And can we doubt his veracity, or be inattentive to his word? And if this be indeed a faithful saying, it makes known the most wonderful and important fact which ever occurred in the history of mankind. For what does it promise? Exemption from some present evil, and the attainment of some future good? It is a deliverance from every evil, and gives the prospect of greater blessings than the tongue can utter or the heart conceive. If a nation were placed on the verge of ruin, and some wise counsellor should propose a method by which it might escape danger, and rise to an unexampled height of prosperity and greatness, would not his advice be worthy of acceptance? How much more forcible is the argu-

ment when we look upon a world lying in wickedness; when we reflect that we ourselves, in common with the whole human race, are by nature and practice sinners, and, as such, exposed to the wrath of God—under a sentence of everlasting destruction from his presence, and of banishment to that state in which the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched! How important, then, is the intelligence of redemption; of a Saviour who has interposed between the Majesty of Jehovah and his offending creatures, who has himself paid the forfeit and penalty of guilt, and made reconciliation for our sins! Who, that believes in the immortality of the soul, can be indifferent to its eternal state? Who, that considers how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God, would reject the offer of salvation, and declare himself unwilling to accept of everlasting life? "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

1. Let us, then, receive this intelligence without delay or hesitation.—What man, who is in peril of his life, would put off the means of preserving it to a future day, if they were now in his power? And is it safer to trifle with eternal than with temporal pain? Would any rational being, who is awake to his real condition, and who has heard of a Saviour, defer to some season of leisure attention to this momentous concern? How can time be employed to any purpose more valuable than this? "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." Let all worldly objects be considered as subordinate to the things which accompany salvation.

2. Let us also receive this message with gratitude.—It is wonderful how prone we are to ingratitude with respect to God. Many, who would on no account be wanting in



expressions of due thankfulness to their fellow creatures, appear to be wholly insensible to the nobler blessings which descend from the Father of mercies. If our minds were under the influence of right feelings, we should find abundant reason of gratitude to God for the ordinary benefits of every day. But great as are these benefits, how far are they surpassed by the rich and abounding grace of our Lord and Saviour! If there be a subject calculated to kindle within us the feelings of gratitude and praise, surely it is the mercy of God in Christ Jesus.—While we were yet enemies, he assumed our nature; and through all the contradiction of sinners, and all the agonies of his passion, he pursued the work of our redemption. The inhabitants of heaven are represented as pouring out in full measure their grateful adorations: “Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests.”

3. We should, in the last place, receive this intelligence with entire submission to the wisdom of God.—If he has ordained this way of salvation, we should be content to follow it. It is not for beings like us to question the wisdom of his proceedings, or the propriety of his appointments. As for God, his way is perfect, and it is our best wisdom to acknowledge our ignorance, and to look to our Lord Jesus Christ as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. If he has declared himself to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life, it is our duty to receive him as such. It may be mortifying to human reason that we cannot explore the wonders of redemption; it may be offensive to our pride, that without Christ we can do nothing, and that our hope of acceptance with God must rest entirely on the merits and mediation of his Son; yet, since

this is the assurance of the word of God, it is ours to submit, to reject all idea of desert in ourselves, and to rely wholly and exclusively on Him who came into the world to save sinners.

To conclude—In what manner has this saying been received by us? Surely, if we have any perception of the evil of our doings, any knowledge of the danger that awaits us, any thought of futurity, this is a saying which should meet with a ready and cordial reception. It carries the promise of pardon and peace even to the chief of sinners; and all who are weary and oppressed will find, in Jesus, the rest and salvation which their souls require. It is possible that the repetition of the intelligence may diminish its interest; and, although it involves all the happiness of this life, and all the blessings of the world to come, we may, by the mere force of habit, become indifferent to the subject, and turn from it as if we had no part nor lot in the matter. How many poor and ignorant heathens, who have received this saying when first proposed to them “with all acceptance,” will rise up in judgment against numbers in this favoured land who bear the name of Christ, and condemn them! It were better for them never to have heard his invitations, never to have mixed with the assemblies of his people, than thus to do despite to the Spirit of Grace, and neglect the offers of salvation.

And as for those who have learnt duly to value this “faithful saying,” and have received it into their hearts by faith, they may be assured that, however great the consolations which it now affords, the time is coming when its truth and importance will be still more fully felt. Our views of salvation are at present inadequate, as our knowledge of the future world is extremely confined; but when we come to know even as we are known; when we are called to the actual enjoyment of those

things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor imagination conceived; when we tread the pavement of heaven, and mingle with the company of the blessed; then we shall value as we ought the nature of salvation, and perceive how faithful, and how worthy of all men to be received, was the intelligence of a Saviour! Let this saying, then, be deeply impressed upon our hearts; let us cherish the impression by reading the Scriptures, meditation, and prayer, and by all the means of grace which remind us of the dying love of our Lord, and of the blessings which he has purchased for us; and let us live like those who know the stable foundation of their hope, and are looking for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, to perfect in glory the happiness of his saints, and to bestow eternal salvation on all them that believe! Amen.

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To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

ALTHOUGH you have already published a systematic reply to Mr. Mant's Tracts, you perhaps may not object to the insertion of the following extract from the writings of a divine whose name will not be under any suspicion of Calvinism—I mean Bishop Burnet. It occurs in his Exposition of the 27th Article. His words are these:—"That does indeed belong to baptism, it makes us the visible members of that one body, into which we are baptized, or admitted by baptism; but that which saves us in it, which both deadens and quickens us, must be a thing of another nature. If baptism were only the receiving us into the society of Christians, there were no need of saying, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. It were more proper to say, I bap-

tize thee in the name, and by the authority of, the Church. Therefore these august words, that were dictated by our Lord himself, shew us that there is somewhat in it that is internal, which comes from God; that it is an admitting men into somewhat that depends only on God, and for the giving of which the authority can only be derived by Him. *But after all, this is not to be believed to be of the nature of a charm, as if the very act of baptism carried always with it an inward regeneration.* Here we must confess that very early some doctrines arose upon baptism *that we cannot be determined by.* The words of our Saviour to Nicodemus were expounded so as to import the absolute necessity of baptism in order to salvation; for it not being observed, that the dispensation of the Messiah was meant by the kingdom of God, but it being taken to signify eternal glory, that expression of our Saviour's was understood to import this, that no man could be saved unless he were baptized; so it was believed to be simply necessary to salvation."

After stating one consequence of this error, the Bishop proceeds to notice a second mistake resulting from the first. "Another opinion, that arose out of the former, was the mixing the outward and the inward effects of baptism: it being believed that every person that was born of the water, was also born of the Spirit; and that the renewing of the Holy Ghost did always accompany the washing of regeneration."

How far Mr. Mant, and those who concur with him, are liable to the imputation of holding the opinions which Bishop Burnet deems erroneous, I must leave to their own judgment to decide.

T.



## MISCELLANEOUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

It being within the limits of your province, to circulate the knowledge of any plan which may advance the happiness of the community, or the well-being of the Established Church, I do not hesitate to send you the following account of an Association recently formed in this parish.

At an early period of the winter, 1815, the respectable Vicar suggested the plan of a Clothing Society, to be composed of honorary and benefit members; the contributions of the former being intended to encourage the economy of the latter. These, consisting of labouring persons, were invited to subscribe weekly one penny or two pence, as their circumstances might permit. The subscriptions were to be received by the clerk of the parish, paid over to the treasurer, and by him funded in the savings bank of the Prudent Man's Friend Society in Bristol, until the end of the year; when the amount should be employed in the purchase of the most useful articles of clothing and bedding, to be distributed among the benefit members, in exact proportion to their several contributions. This plan was zealously supported by the Curate, Church-wardens, and other inhabitants of the parish; and the result has been, that nearly 120*l.* have been received from about 200 subscribers. This sum, with the interest accruing from it, has been carefully laid out in blankets, sheeting, flannel, beaver for cloaks, calico, serge, &c.; all articles of prime necessity, and which have been distributed among the members.

The plan adopted for receiving subscriptions and distributing the articles, so as to avoid both trouble and confusion, was this:—numerical tickets were issued to subscri-

bers, who, on paying their weekly subscription either on *Saturday*, or on *Sunday after the morning Service*, produced their number, and the clerk marked the corresponding number in his book of names; and when the time arrived for delivery, the holders of tickets from No 1 to 100 were desired to attend the first day, the following numbers on the second day, and so forth.

The rules of the Society are few; one appointing a treasurer and committee—and another obliging members to punctuality in payment, which, if omitted for four weeks successively, subjects the party to the loss of the sum already paid, and to exclusion from all benefit for the current year. In case of death, the sum paid by the deceased is repaid, if required, to the friends of the subscriber.

This scheme has proved successful, and its success has produced universal satisfaction in the parish. The benevolent promoters and supporters of it have rejoiced to witness the great comfort which has resulted from it; and those who have benefited by it are grateful and also pleased to think that the comfort they enjoy is the fruit of their *own frugality*. A decisive proof of the prevalence of this feeling is given in the eagerness which the parishioners have shewn to enrol themselves as subscribers for the second year. So general is the impression in favour of the plan, that the subscription book is overflowing with additional names.

Such is a brief account of the origin and effect of this little plan, and which I am induced, by my anxiety for the amelioration of the condition of the labouring classes of society, to recommend to the imitation of others, and especially

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of the clergy and constituted parochial authorities throughout the country. It seems generally admitted, that some radical alteration must soon take place in the poor laws. The growing difficulties and the exorbitant expense of their administration, the inadequate nature of the relief derived from them, and, above all, their demoralizing influence on the minds of the poor, prove the unsuitableness of the system to the present circumstances of our population, and loudly call for a change. The subject has engaged the attention of our best writers on political economy; and the attempts made in every session of Parliament, to counteract the evils arising from the existing poor laws, prove that they cannot long remain on their present footing. And surely it is not desirable that they should so remain. The poor laws, from their very nature, tend to the degradation of those who are the objects of their provisions, and generate or foster principles of the most pernicious indolence and improvidence. The evidence of this is so clear in the daily walk of life, that it seems wholly unnecessary to substantiate it by details.

To undermine, if possible, the deep foundations of this evil, and to raise a superstructure of fairer form and of firmer materials—the population, the rising population especially, of the kingdom should be excited, by all practicable means, to provide for themselves and their families by their own exertions. To effect this may be difficult, but not impracticable; and the duty of attempting it devolves on those who possess superior knowledge of the subject, as well as influence in society. If by small contributions, involving scarcely any sacrifice or privation, experiments may be made, which yield advantages, far beyond their cost, in the comfort they produce to the poor, it is surely, in this

view, important to make them. To enlighten the minds of the lower classes on the subject may be a work of time; but they have not perhaps hitherto had a fair trial on this point. The Benefit Societies, sanctioned by the Legislature, have produced much good, and much disappointment:—various abuses have arisen from them; and the hopes of good from them have been, in numerous instances, cruelly frustrated by the depravity and dishonesty of the projectors, trustees, or stewards. But I have no disposition to interfere with them, much less to supersede them in their beneficial operation. The savings bank system is an excellent one, and is making great progress: but the prospects it holds out seem adapted more especially for those whose habits are already steady, economical, and provident, rather than for that far more numerous class of persons who have no thoughts of averting the storms of life by any other means than such as are furnished by the poor laws.

I particularly recommend to the clergy, and the constituted parochial authorities, the adoption of such plans as I have detailed above, for this important reason among others—that the interests of the church cannot be better maintained than by the affections of the people, and because it affords its ministers an opportunity of being more eminently useful and influential. Reverence for the sacred character does not, in our days, attach to the mere title; but it will invariably spring from a strong conviction that that character is properly sustained, and that reverence merited, by a due discharge of the pastoral duties. The clergy, by our happy constitution, seem to be the natural guardians of their people. They may not only serve them in their spiritual functions by counsel, instruction, reproof, and example; but they may, with much advantage, take a lead in every



plan which is likely to promote the temporal interests of their flock; nor can they devise any means better calculated to give them access to the hearts and consciences of the people, than by taking a prominent interest in their secular concerns. When the labouring class (for it is of them I speak) see the clergyman taking active measures for their temporal comfort, they will not be so easily led astray by others in their spiritual concerns. The absence of such care as this has been one grand cause of defection from our Establishment. An earnest and unceasing attention to the object of raising them from their state of miserable dependence on parish pay, will be a benefit for which they will be grateful.

Another advantage, not trivial, which may be expected from such a plan, is—the increase of the congregation at church. How many among the poor excuse their non-attendance there, by alleging the want of clothes! Whereas, when decently clad, the desire of notice, low as it may be in the list of motives, will operate to draw them thither, and may thus prove the means of everlasting benefit.

It may be objected, that the scheme is scarcely practicable in some parishes, either from excess of population or from its being thinly scattered, from the indisposition of the people, their extreme poverty, or the want of respectable coadjutors. These objections may have force in some instances, but I cannot admit that they should, in any case, prevent the attempt. If the number of subscribers should be small in the commencement, the knowledge of the good resulting to the few will soon spread and augment the number, especially if the assistance of some honorary members is obtained; and let it be observed, that in proportion as the people feel the benefits arising from their own exertions, may such extraneous aid be dispensed with.

The establishment of such Associations as I have recommended, will prove also a bond of union in the political edifice. To separate the interests, and disunite the social relations, of the lower from those of the other classes of society is the grand aim of the apostles of sedition. To frustrate their mischievous purpose, let every effort be used to emancipate the labourer from his abject dependence on others, and to make him feel that he has a stake in society worth preserving. Let him be encouraged by every kind word and work to begin to help himself. And when he has experienced the sweets and comforts of his industry, frugality, and foresight, he will require no farther incentive to persevere in this new course.

In the present depressed state of our manufactories, a further important benefit would accrue from the extension of such schemes. Multiply the sum of 120*l.*, or half that sum, by one eighth of the parishes in England, and see the mighty effect which such an accumulation of demand for our manufactures would produce. If it be asserted, that the sum thus husbanded would have been dispersed in a different channel, but in one equally advantageous to the revenue and the wealth of the country; I answer—If this were proved, yet no man who considers the moral bearings of the question could allow the account to be thus balanced.

Lastly, compare the benefits of such a plan as this with any scheme of a simply gratuitous kind. The mere giving of money, or of clothes, confers very little permanent benefit; and, instead of exciting gratitude and diligence, often produces very contrary effects;—whereas, by calling forth those dormant energies, which have hitherto been overwhelmed with rubbish, in the mind, an invaluable and permanent benefit is conferred. The man is raised to a higher state of existence; and he

feels himself, instead of an useless incumbrance, to be one of the links in the chain of society, mutually imparting and receiving strength, security, and advantage.

Henbury, Gloucestershire,  
December, 1816.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

I AM very sorry to see, by a paper in your valuable miscellany for November last, that a countrywoman of mine has been cast by Providence into an embarrassing situation. After having, in the bosom of the Church of England, received "the truth in the love of it," and for two years offered the sacrifices of joy in her tabernacles, she has been recalled to her native place, where the preaching of the Episcopal clergyman affords no nourishment to her soul; while she can derive no benefit from the lifeless forms of Presbyterian worship, although the clergyman, like the son of consolation, is "a good man." She requests advice and direction. I shall receive peculiar delight if I shall be made instrumental in comforting the heart of a countrywoman. My qualifications for the office I have assumed arise simply from having been placed in a great degree in similar circumstances with herself. I too, Mr. Editor, "under the teaching of an English clergyman, in an English church, and in the use of the Church of England's prayers," obtained, I humbly hope, the same benefit of which she speaks; and, after two happy years, was called to remove to my native land. I left the admirable Liturgy of your church, and one of the most useful and admired preachers of the day, to fill a place in one of the Scotch churches, and to join in what my fair countrywoman has called its "dull and uninteresting mode of worship." So far our circumstances almost completely agree. With your permission, Mr. Editor, I shall proceed to state my further progress.

When I first attended public worship in Scotland, upon my return from England, I *felt* there was a considerable difference in the modes of worship of the respective churches. I believe, however, I was sincerely desirous of spiritual improvement, and therefore humbly resolved to make the best use in my power of the public means of grace with which I was favoured. Accordingly, I was solicitous to be properly prepared for the duties of the house of God. I prayed to God in private for his blessing, and continued with humble hope to wait upon him in the ordinances which I believed were of his appointment. I waited not in vain; and let your fair correspondent listen to the word of a Christian brother, when I assure her, that in a very short time, I derived fully as much satisfaction and enjoyment by engaging in the simple forms of Presbyterian worship, as I once received from the more imposing service of the Church of England. And yet from engaging in the latter I have received a happiness which I would not exchange for all this world has to give. But, blessed be God, through the Church of Scotland there also run streams of living water. Blessed, be his Name, that I have drunk of them and been *satisfied*; and that when I look round on those with whom I take sweet counsel, and walk into the house of God in company, I see many who derive still greater delight from the ordinances of public worship; whose language is, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! Our souls long, yea even faint for the courts of the Lord." This is no fanciful or highly coloured picture. It is drawn with the pencil of truth. And why may not my countrywoman partake of these joys? I know of no reason to prevent her. The fountain is opened, and she has only to "taste and see that the Lord is good." With every feeling of respect, and desire for her



spiritual good, I would humbly advise her to examine herself—to see if the error does not lie nearer her own breast than she has hitherto suspected. Those forms which she has termed dull and uninteresting have proved the comfort and joy of thousands in this vale of tears, who are now standing before the throne of God; and they constitute at this moment one of the chief joys of thousands who are treading in the same steps, and panting after the same glory. I have gone to the Church of England with those I loved; and while my own soul has been refreshed, I have been made happy by the fulness of their joy. But I see continually the simple service of our Church producing, through the blessing of God, the same gracious effects. The reason of this state of things is obvious: the two flocks feed in different pastures; but it is the same shepherd that leads them, the same staff that comforts them.

I will not attempt to trace the causes which may have operated on the mind of your correspondent, to turn away from those green pastures in this Church, on the borders of which she must have trod, while she wandered over “other parts of Scotland,” or for neglecting, after so superficial a trial, that *one* which seems to be at her very door. This is not the object I have at present in view. I will, therefore, only repeat, that as those services which she despises constitute the delight of multitudes of Christ’s flock, they are fitted to make “*her* heart burn,” not with “the recollection of past times,” but with the possession of present enjoyment. Let her, therefore, humbly and fervently seek God in the duties of the closet. Let her pray especially for a blessing on the public ordinances of worship. Let her there mingle with the people of God, and enter with them into his sanctuary, humbly expecting the gracious influences of the blessed Spirit. If she wait upon God in this manner, I

think I may say with confidence, she will soon find cause to adopt the language of the Patriarch, “Surely God is in this place, and I knew it not.”

But every one, Mr. Editor, who is at all acquainted with himself, or with the mind of man, must be powerfully struck by the lordly influence with which prejudice and preconceived opinion rule over us feeble worms of the dust. I have hitherto stated facts which I firmly believe to be true,—to the truth of which I could obtain thousands of subscriptions on earth, and with humble confidence I add, if we could pierce through the veil, in heaven too. But I know, if an opposite opinion has been previously rooted in the mind, the statement I have made will at best produce but a partial effect. It may be admitted to be true to a limited extent; but in the mean time the mind will hold fast, in a great measure, the opinions which have been formerly strongly impressed upon it. I should be particularly sorry if this should be the case, in so far as the individual is concerned for whose benefit I have taken up my pen.

With a view to obviate prejudice, allow me to observe, that the true Christian never, perhaps, experiences more satisfying and exalted enjoyment than in private communion with God. But in these exalted exercises forms are in general, I believe, never thought of. Our ever-blessed Lord seems to have prayed much in the open air. To descend at once to the creature, and our own times: Colonel Gardiner enjoyed much of his most intimate communion with God on horseback; and the late excellent Mr. Cecil held his chief intercourse with the Father of his spirit while pacing his room. Much formality, therefore, in our private approaches to God, will be accounted an hindrance, rather than an assistance, to the most endearing and elevated intercourse which man can enjoy on earth.

Again: how sweet is family religion! How useful, how affecting to join in the exercises of religious worship, with those who are bound to us by the dearest of earthly ties, as well as those which arise from being members of the body of Christ. But the forms used in family religious exercises are in general simple in the extreme. Among members of the Church of England, they are, as far as I have seen, almost exactly the same as with us. But is there any blank made by this absence of forms? Surely not; for if there were, their assistance would be immediately called in. In family worship, therefore, as well as in private devotion—in both of which exercises the vital Christian leaves the things of earth and enjoys the sweetest and most exalted intercourse with his Maker, and in many cases indulges in his feelings of love and joy to an extent which might not be proper in public worship—any forms besides those of the most simple character are thought unnecessary if not prejudicial. Can your correspondent, therefore, inform me, why devotion, which in private flourishes and grows exceedingly without a clothing of forms, should pine away in public if it is not warmed with them; especially when she considers, that in order to make public worship peculiarly animating and interesting to us, we enjoy the privileges of joining with a multitude of our fellow-creatures in the same work of prayer and praise, of hearing together the same word of life preached, of having our hearts expanded and comforted by the sight of so many children of our King travelling with us “on the way to God;”—while we are assured, moreover, of the peculiar presence of God; believing that He “loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.”

Lord, how delightful 'tis to see  
A whole assembly worship Thee!  
At once they sing, at once they pray:  
They talk of heaven, and learn the way.

I am very sorry that all this should be dull and uninteresting to my poor countrywoman. Our forms of worship are indeed simple, as these lines I have quoted; but their simplicity, we think, forms their beauty and excellency. By laying aside all unnecessary *form*, we think we reach sooner the *spirit* of devotion.

But, supposing your correspondent to be now sensible of the impropriety of applying to our simple forms of worship, the terms dull and uninteresting, she may continue to say that the prayers of the English Liturgy are incomparably *finer* than the generality of extemporaneous effusions. I am ready to admit this assertion to a certain extent. But do they speak more the language of the heart? Do they accommodate themselves better to the continually varying circumstances of society in general, and of each individual congregation, and member of that congregation, in particular? Are they more calculated to keep alive the devotional feeling, than the warm yet humble supplications uttered by the “good man,” who is loved as the pastor and friend of his flock; and who in his closet and family has been pouring out his soul to God for a blessing on his ministrations? In reply to these questions, I shall only say, I have not found them so. The devotions of the man of God in his closet are not conspicuous for the characters of sublimity of thought, elegance of expression, or beauty and melodiousness of sentences and periods;—yet if in the pulpit, he can embody the feelings of his heart, burning with similar devotional ardour, in appropriate and scriptural language—and I never knew the clergyman of the Church of Scotland who failed in this particular—I shall hold, so long as it is admitted that “as in water face answereth to face, so does the heart of man to man,” that no forms whatever will bring a people nearer to their God, or be found more reviving and edifying to the flock of Christ.

As your correspondent confesses,



her devotion must have been of a low order indeed while in communion with the Independents; seeing she denominates the act of joining in extemporary prayer, "listening in mere passive acquiescence to prayers repeated." I am sure many members of the Church of England, as they read this sentence, would remember with gratitude the sacred joys of domestic and social religion, and thank God this had not been the character of the prayers they had offered up in these circumstances. Let me inform your correspondent, that the distinction she makes is more ideal than real; for when extemporary prayer is offered up with propriety, there is ample time afforded for the heart of every individual to lay hold on each petition, and present it with due ardour to the Throne of Grace.

Before I conclude, let me beg any of your readers, who may have it in view to visit this "land of mountains and floods," not to be terrified from their excursion by the fear of being deprived of their *spiritual* food, while feasting themselves with the beauties of *nature*. I have myself led some of your number this season to the banquet. They have all testified that it was sweet to their taste. Come, then, and see the goodness of God to your brethren on this northern shore. The sight will gladden your heart and refresh your souls; and when you return to the communion of your own church, to the enjoyment of the distinguished privileges you are blessed with within her ample domain, it will afford pleasure to your benevolent minds, that *that* country whose natural beauties have afforded you so much delight, is nourishing on her breast many sons and daughters who will shine, with yourselves, in the unfading beauties of an ever-during eternity.

A SCOTCHMAN.

Dec. 24, 1816.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

I WAS much struck with the remarks of "A Scotchwoman" in your Number for November, p. 712, being myself a Scotch Episcopalian, and under difficulties which I have been led to consider in a more serious light, from a probability of my being charged with the education of some young members of the Church of England. I was educated in Presbyterian principles; and had I been taught any catechism I have seen, except that of the Westminster Assembly, I should in all probability have continued a member of that Church in whose communion my forefathers lived and died. There has been much discussion on the subject of Calvinism in your valuable miscellany, but I do not recollect that you or your correspondents have fully considered the danger of presenting to the young and ignorant an inverted view of Divine truth. Granting to the Calvinist all he can ask, that personal predestination is clearly revealed in the New Testament, he will not say that it is among the first "principles of the doctrine of Christ." Is it not rather, even in his view of the subject, the top stone of the sacred edifice, which should not be laid till the walls have been raised and consolidated on the basis of elementary truth?

In a season of deep affliction, I became acquainted with the life and letters of Mr. Fletcher of Madely, and Mrs. More's writings. From these I learned, for the first time, that Christianity and Calvinism, although they might be consistent, were not inseparable: and the pleasure I felt in this discovery was followed by an aversion from the Church which had identified them by its authoritative decisions, and under whose tuition I seemed to have lost the most precious years of my life. I became a member of our Episcopal congregation, and fully agree with "A Scotchwoman," as to the tendency of the English Liturgy. Did I then, in

leaving a Calvinistic Church, become what is called an Arminian? No. Mr. Editor: I saw, and still see, nearly equal difficulties in deciding this question either way; and can listen, with equal pleasure and advantage, to the sober practical Calvinist and the devout Arminian. If our hearts were right with God, nothing which bears the stamp of his authority could, as we say in Scotland, come amiss to us. We should be satisfied with the degree of knowledge which he has been pleased to afford us, and repress every wish to anticipate those clearer discoveries which his wisdom has reserved for a higher stage of our existence. "*Ce secret est celui de mon Pere : je ne dois l'apprendre que de lui.*" But is this state of mind natural to us; or do the generality of Christians attain to it suddenly or perfectly? The answer to such questions seems obviously to suggest the impropriety of introducing into a catechism doctrines which cannot be considered with safety or advantage, till the heart is subdued and established by Divine grace. Is it not dangerous, then, to give the whole Bible into the hands of the young and uninformed? The conclusion does not appear to follow. In the Bible, the truths of religion are presented to the mind with that degree of order or want of connection, that clearness or obscurity, which Infinite Wisdom saw fit. Man is not responsible for the consequences of the Divine arrangements, nor entitled to withhold from his fellow-men any part of the word of God from a short-sighted fear of consequences. But when he sets his ingenuity to work in framing systems, the case is altered or rather reversed.

I have long considered the Church of England as having attained that happy medium, in point of doctrine, which seems likeliest, in God's good time, to "reconcile all opinions," as well as to "unite all hearts." But

it appears doubtful whether the existence of an episcopal church in Scotland does not tend to retard rather than to hasten that most desirable event. Our Episcopalians, holding it unlawful to dissent from a rightly constituted church, maintain the invalidity of Presbyterian ordinations.—It is painful to advert to the feeling of hostility which this must tend to keep alive in our Presbyterian brethren; and no less painful, to see this question disposed of by controversial theorists, without adverting to the plain fact—that, in dispensing his gifts and graces, God is no respecter of churches, any more than of persons. I trust, Mr. Editor, that many of your readers will rejoice to see all parties, by common consent, demolish their little enclosures, and employ the materials in strengthening the stakes of the Lord's vineyard. The time will surely come: and come when it may, your publication will have done much to hasten it, if I may judge from its effects upon my own mind.

Your limits admonish me to conclude by offering to your consideration, or that of your correspondents, the question for the sake of which I have troubled you with this communication: Does a member of the Church of England act most suitably to the spirit of charity and catholic union, by conforming, in Scotland, to the Established Church of Scotland, or by adhering to the communion of his own church wherever he goes? Or to put the question in another form, Might not a churchman of a peculiar cast of mind, or placed in peculiar circumstances, avail himself of the festivals, and other opportunities of communion which Episcopal chapels afford him, and, at the same time, communicate with his Presbyterian brethren, as an expression of charity, and an anticipation of that happy period when all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity shall meet around his table in his



kingdom? This question involves more than my own peace or comfort, and is submitted to your consideration by

Your much indebted  
And constant Reader,  
A MEMBER OF THE CATHOLIC  
CHURCH.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

It is not unusual with Arian and Socinian writers, to call in question the orthodoxy of Newton and Locke. And the Edinburgh Reviewers have, in their last Number, endeavoured to fix this charge upon them, and thus both to cast a reflection upon these illustrious persons and to deprive orthodox religion of their support.

Now, although the charge might easily be disproved even by so incompetent an advocate as myself, you have so many correspondents whose knowledge and leisure are greater than my own, that I cannot but call upon them to furnish you and your readers with some information upon this not unimportant point.

C.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

IN "A summary Account of the Proceedings of the British and Foreign Bible Society," which has recently been published, there is the following extract from the Report given by the Rev. Ebenezer Henderson, of his visit to Iceland, for the purpose of distributing Bibles among its interesting population.\*

"Owing to my hurried departure from Reykiavik, and the indisposition of Bishop Vidalin, he deeply regretted that it was not in his power to have the letter of thanks ready, of which he intended to make me the bearer to the Society: but he assur-

ed me it should be forwarded by the first opportunity; and put into my hands a beautiful poem, sealed with the episcopal seal, in which Iceland, personified, expresses her warm sense of gratitude for the benefit conferred upon her by the British and Foreign Bible Society. It is composed by the translator of Milton, the Rev. Jon. Thorlakson, of Bægisâ, and is one of the finest specimens of Icelandic poetry extant. It unites the beauty both of the ancient and modern Scalds; being not only perfectly alliterated, but displaying the charms of a triple metre. A Latin translation by my friend, the learned Professor Finn Magnusson, of Iceland, shall accompany the original."

Your readers will probably dispense with the insertion in your pages, either of the original Icelandic poem, or of the Latin translation of it; but in the same pamphlet is contained an English Imitation of this poem, which, if I may judge from my own feelings, they will read with no small pleasure.

B.

#### ICELAND TO THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

SOCIETY OF CHRIST! whose fame  
The world shall raise o'er thy compeers—  
Thou' most deserving of such name,  
Or in the past or present years—  
Thy beam has shone more lovely bright  
Than solar blaze or lunar ray;  
Has shone, when all around was night,  
And bade the darkness pass away.

When they, our unbelieving foes,  
Would crush the hopes they could not feel,  
You, sons of England, then arose,  
With hearts all love, and hands all zeal.  
You, bound by Charity's blest tie,  
And fearless in defence of truth,  
Spent in our aid unsparingly  
Riches and pow'r, and age and youth.  
And what! tho' near the Arctic pole,  
And, like a heap of drifted snow,  
The chilling north-winds round me roll,  
The land of ice—call'd rightly so;  
Tho' circled by the frigid zone,  
An island in a frozen sea;  
Yet I this charity have known:  
This Christian zeal has glow'd for me.

E

\* The Report is dated Copenhagen, Oct. 16, 1815.

Christ. Observ. No. 181.

For see, the messengers of Peace,  
From Albion new apostles come :  
They, like the old, shall never cease  
To quit their kindred and their home.  
Like them, with canvass wide unfurl'd,  
Careless of life, they tempt the gale,  
And seek the limits of the world.  
Ye friends to God and Iceland, hail !

One visits me—thou Great First Cause,  
Enthron'd in majesty above ;  
'Tis here I recognise thy laws,  
And feel how mindful is thy love.  
And shall I, when thou deign'st to bless,  
Forgetful sleep the years away ;  
And sunk in torpid listlessness,  
Nor strike the lyre, nor raise the lay ?

Th' unfeeling heart, the sordid hand,  
Would mourn, perchance, the vast expense,  
With which on earth's remotest land  
You spread the gifts of Providence.  
The treasures of the word sublime  
Go forth, where'er your banners wave,  
In ev'ry language, ev'ry clime,  
The mind to form, the soul to save.

What then can merit more of praise,  
The mortal and immortal crown,  
What better shall your honours raise,  
And call the tide of blessings down ;  
Than pouring through this world of strife  
The healing balm of sacred lore ;  
And minist'ring that Bread of Life,  
Which, tasted once, man wants no more !

Yet, what your ardent breasts could lead  
These gifts to spread, these toils to dare ?  
Could hopes of gain impel the deed ?  
Could thoughts of avarice be there ?  
No : 'twas the love of Him on high,  
The safety of the poor on earth ;  
Hence rose your sun of Charity,  
Hence has your star of Glory birth.

Society of CHRIST ! most dear  
To Heaven, to virtue, and to me !  
For ever lives thy memory here :  
While Iceland is, thy fame shall be.  
The triumphs of the great and brave,  
The trophies of the conquer'd field,  
These cannot bloom beyond the grave :  
To thee their honours all shall yield.

Thy fame, far more than earth can give,  
Shall soar with daring wing sublime ;  
And wide, and still more wide, survive  
The crush of worlds, the wreck of time.  
Thus Thule and her sons employ  
Their hearts to pour the grateful song ;  
And long thy gifts may we enjoy,  
And pour this grateful tribute long !

Aged and clad in snow-white pall,  
I twine the wreath, and twine for thee :  
Tho' mingled howls in Thule's hall,  
The north-wind with our minstrelsy.  
These strains, tho' rigid as the clime,  
Rude as the rocks—oh ! scorn not thou !  
These strains, in Thule's elder time,  
Kings have receiv'd—receive them now.

Yet not the harp, and not the lay,  
Can give the praise and blessing due ;  
May He whom heav'n and earth obey,  
Ye Christian Fathers, prosper you !  
May He, if pray'rs can aught avail,  
No joys in life or death deny ;  
Crown you with fame that shall not fail,  
With happiness that cannot die !

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

HAVING so promptly inserted in your last Number the verses which I had the melancholy pleasure of transcribing for your pages, I am encouraged to send you two more poems, the production of the same distinguished and lamented individual. The first is supposed to be spoken in the person of our blessed Saviour, and, from its date, must have been written only a few weeks before the author realized its closing promise.  
S.

December, 1814.

"CHILD of man, whose seed below  
Must fulfil their race of wo ;  
Heir of want, and doubt, and pain,  
Does thy fainting heart complain ?  
Oh ! in thought one night recal,  
The night of grief in Herod's hall :  
Then I bore the vengeance due,  
Freely bore it all for you.

"Child of dust, corruption's son,  
By pride deceiv'd, by pride undone,  
Willing captive, yet be free,  
Take my yoke, and learn of me.  
I, of heaven and earth the LORD,  
GOD with GOD, the Eternal WORD,  
I forsook my FATHER's side,  
Toil'd, and wept, and bled, and died.

"Child of doubt, does fear surprise,  
Vexing thoughts within thee rise ;  
Wondering, murmuring, dost thou gaze  
On evil men and evil days ?  
Oh ! if darkness round thee lower,  
Darker far my dying hour,  
Which bade that fearful cry awake,  
My GOD, my GOD, dost thou forsake ?



“ Child of sin, by guilt oppressed,  
 Heaves at last thy throbbing breast ?  
 Hast thou felt the mourner's part ?  
 Fear'st thou now thy failing heart ?  
 Bear thee on, beloved of God,  
 Tread the path thy SAVIOUR trod :  
 He the tempter's power hath known,  
 He hath poured the garden groan.  
 “ Child of Heaven, by me restored,  
 Love thy SAVIOUR, serve thy LORD ;  
 Sealed with that mysterious Name,  
 Bear the Cross, and scorn the shame :  
 Then, like me, thy conflict o'er,  
 Thou shalt rise, to sleep no more ;  
 Partner of my purchased throne,  
 One in joy—in glory one.”

#### THANKFULNESS.

SING to the LORD with cheerful voice :  
 From realm to realm the notes shall  
 sound,  
 And heaven's exulting sons rejoice  
 To bear the full Hosannah round.  
 When starting from the shades of night  
 At dread JEHOVAH's high behest,  
 The sun arrayed his limbs in light,  
 And earth her virgin beauty dressed ;  
 Thy praise transported Nature sung  
 In pealing chorus wide and far ;  
 The echoing vault with rapture rung,  
 And shouted every morning star.

When bending from his native sky,  
 The LORD of life in mercy came,  
 And laid his bright effulgence by,  
 To bear on earth a human name ;  
 The song by cherub voices raised,  
 Rolled through the dark blue depths  
 above,  
 And Israel's shepherds heard amazed  
 The seraph notes of peace and love.  
 And shall not man the concert join  
 For whom the bright creation rose ;  
 For whom the fires of morning shine  
 And eve's still lamps that woo repose ?  
 And shall not he the chorus swell  
 Whose form the incarnate Godhead  
 wore ;  
 Whose guilt, whose fears, whose triumphs  
 tell  
 How deep the wounds his SAVIOUR  
 bore ?  
 Long as yon glittering arch shall bend  
 Long as yon orbs in glory roll ;  
 Long as the streams of life descend  
 To cheer with hope the fainting soul ;  
 Thy praise shall fill each grateful voice,  
 Shall bid the song of rapture sound ;  
 And heavens exulting sons rejoice  
 To bear the full Hosannah round.

#### REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

*A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Carlisle.* By SAMUEL, Lord Bishop of that Diocese, at his third Visitation, in June, 1816. Published at the Request of the Clergy. London : Rivington. 4to. pp. 24.

AMONG the many distinguished functions attached to the episcopal character, none is more important, or more venerable, than that of holding, from time to time, a solemn personal conference with the inferior orders of the clergy, and of addressing them in the words of serious pastoral monition. The privilege of granting holy orders, though prior (if we may so say) in time to this, does not appear superior in dignity. To select, indeed, and to consecrate those who shall

“ feed the church of God, which he hath bought with his own blood,” is no light or menial office. But it seems, if possible, an occasion of a still higher nature, when the existing body of clerical functionaries undergoes an official supervision from the established superiors of the church ; when, assembled, as it were, between the porch and the altar, they are warned, exhorted, entreated, animated, to discharge their duty with fidelity and wisdom. Nor, in any part of his stated calling, does a prelate more immediately appear the vicegerent of the Supreme Ruler of the church, than when he thus summons his brethren to a solemn interview ; when he labours to “ stir up their minds by way of remembrance ;” when he examines if their loins are girt and

their lamps burning ; when he exerts his parental influence to rouse or to edify, to relume faded ardour, or to regulate misdirected exertion.

In point of *manner*, the episcopal addresses delivered on such occasions admit of little variety. When they are grave, calm, earnest, pious, affectionate, they are all they should aim at ; and, to say the truth, their excellence is of no common rank. With regard to *matter*, they are, perhaps, less restricted. Their essential character, indeed, and their ultimate object, must be the same ; but their immediate topics will bear to be indefinitely diversified. They are employed, either in the refutation of prevalent errors, or in accrediting and establishing such truths as are doubted or forgotten. They borrow, therefore, their shape in a good degree from the actual state of opinions, that is, of the most volatile and capricious of all elements, and may be expected to vary with the varying phases of the Christian world.

In his general conception of the nature of such an address, the Bishop of Carlisle appears (if we may presume to judge on the subject) very accurate. He is, for the most part, mild, serious, unaffected, and conciliatory. He also justly considers it as a part of his office to repress the circulation of mistaken notions and the propagation of incorrect practice. Thus far all is well ; but, in the application of this principle, persons of good intentions may differ. In the composition before us, the chief, or rather the exclusive, subject of episcopal objection is *the Bible Society*.

To be severe in criticising productions of this sort, so far as respects mere style, would be very idle, if not somewhat arrogant.—Deference is due to advanced age and high station ; especially to station of an ecclesiastical kind. It is, therefore, of little consequence—

perhaps it is worse than unnecessary—to inquire, whether such writings are lucidly reasoned and clearly worded on the one hand ; or, on the other, are the indistinct enunciation of confused sentiments. Much that is true, and much that is pious, may consist with a very moderate share of literary or logical merit. But, when the weight of an episcopal name is employed, with whatever purity or excellence of purpose, for the discouragement of that which is good, and the promotion of that which is evil, the right of free though respectful remonstrance immediately takes effect, however humble the quarter in which it is to be exercised. By those who deem the Bible Society one of the most efficacious instruments of religious knowledge in existence, the cause of that Society cannot possibly be surrendered, even to the most imperative considerations of deference for exalted rank or submission to constituted authority.

There is another distinction which may be noted in this place. When men once admit the excellence of any given benevolent institution, it little matters, perhaps, what precise rank they allot to it, in comparison with other charities of the same class. Two centuries ago, the great casuists were wont to agitate such questions as this : Of all the benevolent purposes to which a rich man may apply his fortune, which is the best ? Such inquiries wise and conscientious men might answer very differently, and yet might differ very little after all. In the same manner, at the present day, some persons might rather choose to subscribe to the Bible Society, and others to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, while the great utility of each institution was fully conceded on both sides. The question would then be one of bare preference, and might be discussed amicably, and decided variously. If



this were all, we know not that we should be very anxious to embark in the controversy, and at any rate should embark in it with feelings perfectly tranquil. It is only when such a comparison is instituted for the purpose of passing a positive censure on the Bible Society—it is only when that Society is decried as absolutely useless or mischievous—it is only when, through the sides of that Society, the sufficiency of the sacred Scriptures themselves is virtually and in effect, though undesignedly, assailed, that we feel this to be a controversy of the widest possible extent and the deepest conceivable importance. Whether the Society in question is or is not the most useful charity on record (though our own opinion inclines to the affirmative) appears to be a point which needs raise no controversy: let but its positive and eminent merit be allowed, and we are content to adjourn the question of its exclusive supremacy.

It should be mentioned to the honour of the Bishop of Carlisle, that, in treating a subject which has proved but too fruitful of acrimonious invective, he maintains an uniform tone of good temper and equanimity. Nor is he only moderate in language, but, generally speaking, candid in sentiment also. If this last remark admits of any exception, it is this; that, throughout the Charge, there seems to run a tacit assumption that the true friends of the Church of England must of course be adverse to the Bible Society. On one occasion, which will be pointed out in the sequel, the assumption is made overtly. Meanwhile, it may be observed, that assumptions of such a nature are not the less injurious because not couched in broad or offensive terms.

It will now be our business to present the reader with some extracts from this Charge; and, that we may do no injustice, those extracts shall

be copious. In subjoining to them a few strictures of our own, it shall be our endeavour to avoid all unfairness and asperity, without any sacrifice of the freedom of opinion.

“The most prominent among the many institutions which have been formed, is that of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Under an idea of a general and simultaneous dispersion of the word of God throughout the whole world, and of combining all mankind in love and good-will towards each other, the fundamental rule of the Society was to distribute Bibles, and Bibles only, without note or comment: for it was taken for granted, that by thus intermeddling with none of the various interpretations put upon the words of Scripture by different discordant sects, this harmony was to be produced. Whether this idea be well founded; whether human nature can thus be moulded, and turned out of its usual course, as to the determined prosecution of its several aims and objects, is to be doubted; and the kingdom has been strangely divided upon it. Both the learned and the unlearned have taken their sides. So that the great object, which was at first depended upon, has totally failed of its effect: general union and universal harmony are quite out of the question.

“On thus entering upon the subject of the Bible Society, I am well aware how difficult, I might say how impossible, it is at this present time so to frame a discourse, or so to shape any argument, as not to be liable to reproach from some or other of the various supporters of that institution. For the very idea of distributing the word of God seems to have such natural force and propriety, that nothing can be so obvious as to represent every opposition to the design, however injudiciously the design may have been carried on, as a wish to debar mankind from their just liberty of judgment, or from obtaining a true knowledge of the way to eternal life. A subject of this kind is calculated to supply abundant matter of declamation, and to convey to many, notions of standing upon elevated ground, while they contend, in popular phrase, for the unbounded diffusion of the holy Scriptures, whereby alone we can become wise unto salvation.

“I would therefore here, in the very beginning, speaking in the mildest manner, so far obviate all such remarks, as to declare, that nothing can more readily coincide with the regular purposes, and incli-

their lamps burning; when he exerts his parental influence to rouse or to edify, to relume faded ardour, or to regulate misdirected exertion.

In point of *manner*, the episcopal addresses delivered on such occasions admit of little variety. When they are grave, calm, earnest, pious, affectionate, they are all they should aim at; and, to say the truth, their excellence is of no common rank. With regard to *matter*, they are, perhaps, less restricted. Their essential character, indeed, and their ultimate object, must be the same; but their immediate topics will bear to be indefinitely diversified. They are employed, either in the refutation of prevalent errors, or in accrediting and establishing such truths as are doubted or forgotten. They borrow, therefore, their shape in a good degree from the actual state of opinions, that is, of the most volatile and capricious of all elements, and may be expected to vary with the varying phases of the Christian world.

In his general conception of the nature of such an address, the Bishop of Carlisle appears (if we may presume to judge on the subject) very accurate. He is, for the most part, mild, serious, unaffected, and conciliatory. He also justly considers it as a part of his office to repress the circulation of mistaken notions and the propagation of incorrect practice. Thus far all is well; but, in the application of this principle, persons of good intentions may differ. In the composition before us, the chief, or rather the exclusive, subject of episcopal objection is *the Bible Society*.

To be severe in criticising productions of this sort, so far as respects mere style, would be very idle, if not somewhat arrogant.—Deference is due to advanced age and high station; especially to station of an ecclesiastical kind. It is, therefore, of little consequence—

perhaps it is worse than unnecessary—to inquire, whether such writings are lucidly reasoned and clearly worded on the one hand; or, on the other, are the indistinct enunciation of confused sentiments. Much that is true, and much that is pious, may consist with a very moderate share of literary or logical merit. But, when the weight of an episcopal name is employed, with whatever purity or excellence of purpose, for the discouragement of that which is good, and the promotion of that which is evil, the right of free though respectful remonstrance immediately takes effect, however humble the quarter in which it is to be exercised. By those who deem the Bible Society one of the most efficacious instruments of religious knowledge in existence, the cause of that Society cannot possibly be surrendered, even to the most imperative considerations of deference for exalted rank or submission to constituted authority.

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nations, and endeavours of the long life of which God in his great mercy hath favoured me, than to spread the word of God in every quarter, so that all, from the least to the greatest, 'may know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.' In a great measure, the matter is ill understood by many. Questions have been raised, as if the distribution of the Bible itself was reprobated. I trust, my brethren, that the whole tenour of our lives, yours as well as mine, has already proved that we have never entertained one thought of the kind. It is the mode of doing it, and the effects of it, which have been called in question. A thing may be right in the main view of its nature and purpose, but may become wrong and detrimental from the injudicious use which may be made of it. Here it is that well-disposed persons, not to mention others, often differ: so that it is difficult so to deliver one's sentiments, as not to awaken at least, if not to give, fresh point to the difference of opinion, which may have been formed.

"Still with this sense of difficulty before me, it would ill become me, holding so high a situation in the church, to suppress my thoughts, or to hesitate one moment about giving you my opinions upon this interesting subject. This I should have done at our last meeting, most fully, had I been aware that such a plan had been in agitation: but it was kept concealed from me, and from all those with whom I am accustomed to communicate upon the official business of the diocese, till just after our last meeting was closed. This, therefore, I would wish now to do, without being thought to point at any one amongst us, or to use one single word which might reasonably give offence or provocation. Indeed, I have already given my opinion in all the conversations, and at all the private opportunities which have been offered me.—Without equivocation, therefore, or the least disguise, I feel it incumbent upon me now publicly to declare, that I cannot allow myself to join any of the Bible Societies which have been planted so numerous in the various parts of our kingdom: and that, for these plain reasons, among others:—because I do not think that they are calculated to introduce purer notions of religion, than we have at present; or to increase the understanding of the Scriptures, beyond what our present means will do; and, certainly, because I do not think that they are calculated to promote our Ecclesiastical Establishment, or the quiet of it, both which we all profess to maintain.

"It is now needless to go into all the points which relate to the Bible Society, as though it were a new subject, upon which any fresh information of consequence could be given. The subject has been discussed in popular meetings and various publications, throughout the whole kingdom; so that the Society, its great wealth, its plans, and modes of operation, are completely before the public; and it must have its course; and all ranks of people must satisfy themselves, with respect to all the observations which have been made upon it. I cannot consider it as the special and exclusive duty of the clergy, under all these circumstances, (for they may be better employed in cautionary measures,) to labour to stop its progress: indeed, they could not if they would; for it is in a manner placed above our reach.

"But although we cannot do all that we could desire, and prevent the minds of our people from being disturbed by the introduction of this method of dispersing the word of God, what forbids that we should cautiously watch what is going forward; should observe the fears of many well-disposed persons who have taken an alarm; and should try to adopt such measures as we think likely to quiet any apprehensions; or to supply any thing which may be wanting; or to remedy any thing wrong which may have been introduced?

"The first thing which seemed unintelligible to the Friends of the Establishment was, how the lower orders of our people, by merely possessing a Bible, could gain any understanding of the true scriptural meaning of various parts of the holy Scriptures, without having, at the same time, some guide or help by which they might obtain that knowledge which they sought. It is not the mere possession of a treasure, which makes a man rich, but the knowledge and spirit how to make use of it. It is evident, that when Christ introduced his Gospel, he thought it necessary to communicate to certain of his disciples, the true interpretation of the many abstruse prophecies which relate to himself, of which till that moment they had no conception at all. Thus, Lactantius speaks of this circumstance: 'Profectus ergo (Jesus) in Galilæam, discipulis iterum congregatis, Scripturæ Sanctæ literas; id est, Prophetarum arcana patefecit, quæ antequam pateretur, perspicere nullo modo poterant, quia ipsum passionemque ejus annuntiabant.' Lactant. Instit. Lib. iiii. cap. xx. And afterwards, in the Apostolical Age, Philip



is sent to the Ethiopian Eunuch, to shew him the spirituality of the Prophecies of Isaiah, and the general doctrine of the faith of Christ." pp. 8—12.

We here make our first pause; and request the reader's attention to the following observations.

The members of the Bible Society have been accustomed to regard the actual success of their undertaking as affording a strong presumption in its favour. Under every new attack, under every fresh prediction of evil, they have referred the objector to past experience for a reply. Of this anchor the Bishop of Carlisle would now deprive them; for such we presume to be the purport of the first paragraph of the foregoing extract. It is a paragraph, indeed, of which the general bearing is clearer than the exact construction. But the subject demands some notice, and may justify a moment's delay before we enter on the more direct arguments of the right reverend author. What may be the precise force of the expressions used in the paragraph referred to—what exactly is meant by the "object of an enterprise failing of its effect"—what that is, which has so strangely divided the kingdom—whether it be the idea of "combining all mankind in love and good-will," or the question about "moulding and turning human nature out of its course, as to the determined prosecution of its several aims and objects;"—these and such other points it is not necessary to agitate. All that seems important is, to state what we consider as the general scope of the passage in question;—and we read it thus: The great object proposed by the institution of the Bible Society was the promotion of mutual good-will and kindness among discordant sects of Christians;—and that object has utterly failed.

It certainly is not correct to represent the conciliation of discordant

sects as "*the great object*" of the Bible Society. The *great object* (strictly speaking, it may be called the *only object*) of the Society, was and is the dispersion of Bibles and Testaments without note or comment. It is an object perfectly simple; and how far it has "failed of its effect" may be judged from this equally simple fact, that the number of Bibles and Testaments distributed by the Society, from the period of its institution up to September 1816, amounted to *one million, six hundred and eighty-six thousand, five hundred and ninety-one*.

An *effect*, however, of the institution, not perhaps definitely proposed at the outset, yet early and warmly anticipated, was that, by uniting Christians of various persuasions in a common pursuit of deep interest, it would soften down their mutual asperities of feeling, and promote the reciprocation of kindness and benevolence. A *collateral* object of the Society this may fairly be called; but, whatever it was, we are now given to understand that the design argued great ignorance of human nature, and that the event has not justified the expectations so fondly entertained. The controversy respecting the expediency of the institution has disturbed and divided the kingdom: learned and unlearned have all taken their sides; and "general union and universal harmony are quite out of the question."

The members of the Bible Society would probably have no objection to allow that the opposition which the plan has encountered was not foreseen at the commencement. Judging from ourselves, we should certainly say that it was not; nor should we hesitate to add, that the spectacle of such an opposition to such a cause has operated on us as a painful disappointment, and that it has excited feelings far different from the complacency with which we should contemplate a scene of

"general union and universal harmony." Yet the use made of this circumstance on the present occasion does strike us as somewhat singular. The case stands as follows:—The expediency of the Bible Society was questioned nearly as soon as the Society began to exist; and the opposition to it, for a time at least, continued in unabated strength.—The "novel union and combination" of Churchmen and Dissenters, was peculiarly reprobated. It was treated as a principle inexpressibly mischievous. It was denounced also as chimerical, and as pregnant with the seeds of disunion. This fact the Bishop of Carlisle justly states; and he has at the same time evidently and deliberately adopted the views of those by whom such a denunciation was made. Meanwhile, the Society developed its extraordinary growth in perfect peace. Its influence expanded with the power and the silence of light. The novel union produced no trouble, nor issued in any explosion. And still the assailants spoke ominous things;—and still they spoke, only to be falsified by the event. No mischief took place, except the prediction of mischief; no discordant sound was heard, except the prophecy of discord. Then, precisely at this point, the adversaries turn short on the Society, and quote this very controversy of their own raising, as a realization of the evils which they had abortively foretold. They cite the baffled prophecy of contention as a triumphant proof that contention exists, and mistake their own violence for the quarrels which they foreboded!

This is really a new method of making prophecies fulfil themselves.

On this topic, it does not seem necessary to add any thing more, except the statement of our firm conviction that the evils attending the controversy on the Bible Society—and we sorrowfully admit

them to be real and considerable evils—have, however, been compensated, and with an immense overbalance, by the benefits which that institution has produced even already.—But there is another subject on which we shall venture to detain the reader a moment, before we advance to the body of the right reverend author's objections. It will have been seen that, in advertising to the controversy in question, the Bishop uses the words, "the first point which seems strange to the friends of the Establishment"—thus directly *appropriating* this appellation to those members of the Church who have disapproved of the Bible Society. The expression, we are afraid, is used under too strong a profession of peculiar caution to be ascribed to inadvertence. Besides which (as we have already intimated) the Bishop treats the question, through a great part of the subsequent disquisition, as if it were entirely a question between the Church of England, especially the clergy, on the one hand, and the Bible Society on the other.

Would the Bishop of Carlisle, then, really exclude the members of the Bible Society in a body from the pale of the friends of the Establishment? Would he really maintain that, in the mouth of a subscriber to that Society, professions of ecclesiastical allegiance must necessarily, or, at least, very probably, be false? Is this the judgment he would pass on those lamented characters, Mr. Spencer Perceval, Bishop Porteus, and Dean Vincent? The numerous and honourable mitres which the Society reckons among its chief ornaments, would he consider these as stained with treason? The distinguished members of the laity who have stood forward in defence of the Society; as, for example, Lords Liverpool, Harrowby, Castlereagh, Hardwicke; would he regard these as secretly treacherous, or in



different to that Establishment of which they are professed disciples, or constituted guardians? Insinuations of such a nature, against such persons, are really somewhat confounding. An eminent statesman of antiquity, on being informed that one of the most illustrious of his countrymen had been put to death on a charge of treason, is reported to have exclaimed, "If Parmenio was innocent, who then is safe? If Parmenio was guilty, who then is to be trusted?" So we may say; If the exalted personages alluded to, and many others equally, or scarcely less, distinguished, are innocent of the disloyalty charged upon them, then where is the character, however elevated, which may not be vilified? If, on the contrary, they deserve the imputation, then what possible assurance can we have of the loyalty of any body else,—of the Bishop of Carlisle, for example, or the Bishop of Lincoln, or the new Bishop of Llandaff, or the learned and (we affix the epithet most sincerely) venerable Society at Bartlett's Buildings?

Let us now proceed to examine the substance of the right reverend author's reasoning; which is, in fact, no other than the familiar argument of the inexpediency and danger of distributing Bibles without note or comment. The lower orders of the community, it seems, cannot gain any understanding of the true scriptural meaning of various parts of the holy Scriptures, unless they are provided with some guide or help for the purpose. So far from this, the distribution of the unexplained Bible, the Bishop elsewhere tells us, will be too likely to "give encouragement to the wayward mind to wrest it to wrong ideas, perplexing doubts, and hurtful purposes."

The absolute necessity of Biblical commentaries, and the dangers to be apprehended from the circulation of the unexpounded text, have, as has Christ. Observ. No. 181.

just been observed, formed a familiar head of objection with the assailants of the Bible Society. Occasionally, indeed, the argument has been proposed in a shape so extravagant, as clearly to identify it with the old papal topic of the *nasus cereus*, the theme of the strongest reprobation of our reformers. With what feelings would the Riddleys and the Jewels have heard it maintained by a member of the English Church, that the true and unadulterated word of God, if given away by a Papist, will be productive of Popery; if by a Socinian, of Socinianism; if by a Calvinist, of Calvinism? Yet has this proposition been laid down in the broadest terms by a controvertist on the present subject. The work before us exhibits a greatly mitigated, and far more tolerable, form of the same argument. The Bishop of Carlisle is apprehensive that wayward minds may pervert the unexplained Bible to hurtful purposes. He cannot conceive how the lower classes should understand the Holy Scriptures, or at least various parts of them, without assistance. But the argument does not appear to be supported by any new proofs or illustrations, excepting a passage from Lactantius, and an incident recorded in the Acts; both of which, so far as they apply at all, prove the contrary.

The passage from Lactantius, whatever be its force or meaning, does not refer to the scriptural books in general, but to the writings of the prophets, or, at the most, to the whole of the Old Testament;\* which

\* The technical term *The Prophets*, has a greater latitude in the writings of the fathers, than among modern Christians. Moses, David, and Solomon, are included in it by Lactantius himself (Inst. lib. IV. cc. 5, 8.;) and the word appears occasionally put for the Old Testament in general. The term was used with a different sort of latitude by the later Jews. See Christ. Observ. Vol. IV. pp. 765 et seq. This last method of using it is supposed to have been

now constitutes but a part of the sacred canon. But what does the passage in fact mean? A very leading idea of the disquisition\* from which it is extracted, is this; That the ancient prophecies were a sealed book before the coming and passion of Christ, but that, as they referred to these very events, therefore, when the events actually took place, the predictions became lucid and intelligible. In exact conformity with this idea, the extract in question states, that our Saviour, after his resurrection, explained the prophecies to his disciples, which prophecies could not be understood (*"antequam pateretur"*) *before he suffered*. It is true, the passage further implies that, even then, those prophecies would not have been understood had not our

sanctioned by our Divine Saviour himself in the last chapter of St. Luke (cited above.) See Poole's Synops. in loco.

It is necessary to bear in mind the enlarged sense put on the term by the fathers, in order to conceive the full force of that passage in the *Te Deum*; "The glorious company of the Apostles—the goodly fellowship of the Prophets—praise thee." Indeed, we conceive the term *Apostles* also to be there used with a similar extension; and this idea too seems justified by several passages in the fathers. The reader will then perceive with what beauty of gradation the chorus of praise is arranged in that unrivalled composition. The Hallelujah is represented as beginning with the highest order of created beings, and as descending, through various orders of the blessed, to earth; while the angelic host of cherubim and seraphim,—the beatified ministers of the complete dispensation of Christ,—the beatified ministers of the prophetic dispensation of Moses,—the beatified martyrs of Christ who had sealed a good confession with their blood,—and the holy church throughout all the world,—successively bear a part in the harmony. This simple description is perhaps more really sublime than the splendid angelic hierarchy of the schools, with all their "thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers," even when distributed and *quaternioned* by the admirable genius of Milton.

\* Vide Instit. lib. IV. cc. 15, 20.

Saviour himself condescended to expound them;—that is, they would not have been understood by the disciples:—but does this apply to us, whom these very disciples have furnished with the true solution of the prophetic mysteries, by largely relating the history of their Divine Master, and minutely illustrating it from the several predictions which it successively fulfilled? Do we, who are thus surrounded by the daylight of the New Testament, stand in the same position with the disciples under the circumstances supposed, rootedly prepossessed as they were with the notion of a temporal Messiah, stunned in all their hopes by the death of Christ, and scarcely able to trust their senses for the evidence of his resurrection?

We have thus joined issue very contentedly with the right reverend author, on the passage quoted from Lactantius; with what success the reader must judge;—but, having done so, let us be allowed to express our surprise, that, in citing an incident in the history of our Saviour, and citing it as the ground-work of an important argument, it should have been thought proper to state the fact rather in the words of an uninspired father of the church, and that too so late a father as Lactantius, than in the language of the sacred Evangelist who records it. It is perfectly fair to give us the note and comment; but at least let us have the text also. St. Luke, who relates the incident in his last chapter, not only says much more fully what is said by Lactantius (and, so far, the remarks we have already made on Lactantius will apply,) but he adds this capital circumstance, "*Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.*" Here was more than *explication*; here was *illumination* likewise; and it is *this* which makes the important feature of the story. For any thing that appears, it was hard-



ness of heart and prejudice which made the disciples so slow in comprehending the Prophets; not any inherent difficulty in applying the predictions which they had read to the occurrences which they had seen. At all events, the circumstance recorded by the Evangelist may suggest to us a serious doubt, whether the principal requisite for a profitable perusal of the Scriptures be not something beyond the power of notes and comments to supply.

The Bishop's second precedent is derived from the Acts of the Apostles. Philip, he observes, was "sent to the Ethiopian Eunuch, to shew him the spirituality of the prophecies of Isaiah, and the general doctrine of the faith of Christ." The intended inference is, that the Bible should not be entrusted to the common people, unless accompanied either by a teacher or by a commentary. It would hardly appear that the conclusiveness of this inference had been very deeply considered. For can it be seriously maintained, that even a child, with the New Testament—nay, with this very narrative—in his hands, resembles the noble Ethiopian, educated and stately resident in a heathen country, a recent visiter at Jerusalem, and in whose hearing our blessed Saviour had probably never been named except as a notorious and convicted imposter? The precedent little applies to those who, in the same page that relates the Ethiopian's doubts, find also recorded the decisive manner in which those doubts were resolved. In the case of such persons, the passage, far from proving the want of a commentary, does itself supply the commentary that was wanted, and thus enables them, even without a guide, to "understand what they read."

If, then, the two precedents that have been just considered, are to be argued from in the unconditional

manner of which he who has produced them sets the example,—they seem clearly to establish, that the sacred books require *no* exposition whatever. For both of them lead us to this consideration, that the Scriptures as we now have them, that is, the Jewish and Christian Scriptures combined, give us, not only *doubts*, but *solutions*. The Bible, in this view, is itself both text and commentary, that which was commentary in the days of the Apostles having now become a part of the text. Therefore, arguing broadly and arbitrarily from these precedents, it would rather follow that all additional commentaries might be discarded, as being at the best superfluities.

But such inferences in the gross are little conducive to the interests of truth. There is no doubt that Scripture contains difficulties which a judicious expositor may often assist in dispelling: neither is there any doubt that a practical commentary may much contribute to edification; and, on both grounds, it is clearly incumbent on Christians, according to their several means and opportunities, to promote the use and circulation of such expositions and commentaries as they honestly judge to be the best and most scriptural. The note and the comment are important as well as the text; the office of circulating, so far as occasions serve, the one, is as obligatory as that of circulating, so far as occasions serve, the other. To this extent all are agreed. But, when we come to estimate the *relative* importance of these two objects, the *comparative* force of these two obligations, then it is that a deplorable difference of sentiment arises.

In the opinion of Dr. Wordsworth (for, in him, we have a right to assume that the expression is an accurate exponent of the thought,) the distribution of explanatory comments and devotional forms is of almost

equal dignity and importance with that of the sacred text itself. In our judgment, on the contrary, such language is rash, unscriptural, and untrue; for the former of those objects is *very greatly* inferior in dignity and importance to the latter. Nor does this imply any inconsistency. The mathematician talks of his *infinities of different orders*, and with much more reason may the moralist talk of obligations unequal in their degree. It is not less the duty of a Christian to relieve the temporal necessities of his fellow-men, than to minister to their spiritual wants; but, if these duties were in any case to come into conflict, that man would be thought a very indifferent Christian who could hesitate between them a single moment.

To resume, however, our more immediate task—The Bishop of Carlisle repeatedly adverts to the *alarm* which the proceedings of the Bible Society have occasioned. In a passage which will hereafter be adduced, he even describes this apprehension as having extended to "*multitudes.*" They dread, it seems, the effects which the indiscriminate perusal of the Bible may produce on the bulk of the people.

The intended inference for the Bible Society, we presume, is, *Multis terribilis, multos caveto*. But surely these multitudes might find some fitter subject for their fears. We believe it to be a very great mistake in point of fact, that persons of the lower orders, when put in possession of a Bible, are apt to be misled or injured by the more difficult or perplexing parts of holy writ. For it very beautifully happens—and it is an additional example of the *principle of compensation* in the works of Providence—that the same circumstances which in one view increase their danger as readers of the unexplained Scripture, do in another diminish it. This we shall attempt briefly to shew, not as a matter of curious observation, but as immedi-

ately bearing on the great question of the circulation of the Bible without note or comment. In truth, having disposed, as we trust, of the precedents referred to by our author, it is natural that we should now directly address ourselves to the disproof of his leading position.

In the first place, if uneducated readers of the Bible are less acute than the learned, they are in the same proportion less fastidious. Their unsophisticated minds thrive on that plain fare which more delicate tastes find homely and unpleasing. They read the simple narrative of the Fall of Man, and they draw from it the obvious moral, without once thinking it necessary to allegorize it into modern philosophy. They peruse the history of Redemption, and they contemplate its mysteries in reverent attention, without once finding it expedient to resolve them into the *rational* religion of Socinianism. With them, the heart is more busy than the discursive faculty, and it teaches them gratefully to receive truths

From which our nicer optics turn away.

It cannot be necessary to quote authorities on so clear a point. That the great perverter of Scripture has been presumptuous or purblind learning, not humble and unsuspecting ignorance, is a truth now universally known, and always acknowledged,—always that is, except when it is to be acted upon. Yet, since Lactantius, as we have seen, has been appealed to in the work before us, it may not be uninteresting to shew how closely the opinion of that classical writer concurs with the general sentiment on the present subject. In a passage, of which an English translation may more easily represent the sense than the elegance, the Christian Cicero thus delivers himself: "One principal reason why the sacred Scripture finds so little credence with the wise and learned and mighty of the present age, is, that



the prophets employ a plain and familiar style, adapted to the intelligence of the common people. They are therefore held cheap by those who desire neither to read nor to hear any thing that is not recommended by polish and eloquence,—men, whose minds are incapable of being impressed, except by that which charms their ears with its harmony. Whatever appears low or mean, such persons reject as trifling, puerile, and vulgar. In a word, they regard nothing as true, but that which is agreeable; nothing as worthy of belief, but that which excites pleasurable sensations; and make embellishment, not truth, their standard of value.”\*

In the second place, it is true that the poor have neither leisure nor learning to understand the more abstruse or mysterious parts of Scripture; but then this want of leisure and learning *disinclines*, as well as *disqualifies* them, for the study. Their hours of reading are the hours of lassitude or of sickness. It is not in such seasons that men go laboriously wrong. The scholar and the sophist may read for the purposes of contention; but the humble read that they may be instructed, and the weary and heavy-laden that they may find rest. Their objects are repose, comfort, tranquillity; not vain exertations of reasoning, or oppositions of science falsely so called. To an uneducated man, the simplest portions of Scripture will naturally prove

the most engaging. Give him in his leisure moments a Bible, and observe the result. The plainer narratives of the Old Testament, such as the histories of Noah, of Job, or of Daniel—the Psalms, so remarkable for the truth and nature of their style—perhaps, the obviously evangelical passages of Isaiah,—these will be found to occupy his chief attention. But, even above these,

“Perhaps the Christian volume is his theme,  
How Guiltless Blood for guilty man was  
shed;  
How He who bore in heaven the Second  
Name  
Had not on earth whereon to lay his  
head.”\*

The Cotter of Burns, indeed, does not altogether confine himself to easy reading; but the Cotter of Burns, it must be remembered, is a person of education.

Now if, in the perusal of these touching compositions, some feeling arises beyond a vague curiosity or a merely transient interest,—if a desire is excited to know more familiarly the mighty and impressive subjects spoken of,—if a sentiment of reverence grows up for the excellence of Revelation and the majesty of its Author,—if a perception, however indistinct or mysterious, is attained, of the powers of the world to come,—if an approach, however faint, is made to that Christian humility on which, as on some low valley, the dews of heaven love to descend,—why must it be supposed a probable consequence, that the mind, which is at one moment thus engaged and impressed, will, in the next, plunge into all the difficulties of sceptical or polemical speculation? Why must it, even on the ordinary principles of human nature, be imagined, that the humble student in question will desert that plain reading which has come home to his heart, for matters of doubtful or delusive disputation? Why must it be thought that he will

\* Cotter's Saturday-Night.

\* “Nam hæc in primis causa est, cur apud sapientes et doctos et principes hujus sæculi Scriptura Sancta fide careat; quod Prophetæ communi ac simplici sermone, ut ad populum, sunt locuti. Contemnuntur itaque ab iis, qui nihil audire vel legere nisi expositum ac disertum volunt; nec quicquam inhærerere animis eorum potest, nisi quod aures blandiori sono permulcet. Illa verò, quæ sordida videntur, anilia, inepta, vulgaria existimantur. Adeò nihil verum putant, nisi quod auditu suave est; nihil credibile, nisi quod potest incutere voluptatem; nemo rem veritate ponderat, sed ornatu.” Instit. Lib. V. § 1.

not rather recede with instinctive reverence from the dark places of a Revelation which he has learned to respect? Why must it be believed that the impressions his untutored mind has received, may not operate as a preservative against snares which might prove perilous to harder understandings? Above all, why must it be concluded that the aid of a super-human influence will be wanting, to cherish his faint piety, to give definition to his vague ideas, and to fortify him against the seductions of the tempter? There is surely no absurdity in trusting that such a person may experience the merciful guidance of that Spirit, who is described as ever present to human infirmity,—as knocking at the heart for admittance—as waiting to be gracious—as anxious (if the figure may be used) for occasions of infusing holy desires, suggesting good counsels, and prompting just works: for under such human images as these have the Scriptures been pleased to represent the magnitude, though not the nature, of perfect and passionless goodness.

If this is enthusiasm, it is the enthusiasm of Saint Chrysostom and the Homilies of the Church of England. "God receiveth the learned and unlearned, and casteth away none, but is indifferent unto all. And the Scripture is full, as well of low valleys, plain ways, and easy for every man to use and to walk in, as also of high hills and mountains, which few men can climb unto. And whosoever giveth his mind to holy Scriptures with diligent study and burning desire, it cannot be, saith Saint John Chrysostom, that he should be left without help. For either God Almighty will send him some godly doctor to teach him—as he did to instruct the Eunuch, a nobleman of Ethiopia, and treasurer to Queen Candace; who having a great affection to read the Scripture, although he understood it not, yet for the desire that he had unto God's

word, God sent his Apostle Philip to declare unto him the true sense of the Scripture that he read—or else, if we lack a learned man to instruct and teach us, yet God himself from above will give light unto our minds, and teach us those things which are necessary for us, and wherein we be ignorant. And, in another place, Chrysostom saith that man's human and worldly wisdom, or science, is not needful to the understanding of Scripture; but the revelation of the Holy Ghost, who inspireth the true meaning unto them that with humility and diligence do search therefor."\*

Not the least observable circumstance in this extract, is the purpose for which it introduces the Ethiopian nobleman; a purpose so essentially different, not to say diametrically opposite, from that to which the same history is turned in a passage already cited from the Charge before us. In the one case, the history is quoted to prove that the unaccompanied Scriptures cannot safely be studied by illiterate persons; for they will never be clear to them without a commentator. In the other, it is brought to prove that they may safely be studied by such persons; for a commentator, or what is better than a commentator, will never be wanting. Opinions are free on all subjects; but, for ourselves, we are much too old-fashioned to hesitate, on this occasion, whether we should side with the Charge or with the Homily,—with the Bishop of Carlisle, or with the united authority of Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer.

In answer to these positions, a line of argument may perhaps be adopted, which would by no means be new with the opponents of the Bible Society. All these good effects, it may be said, might indeed flow from the circulation of the Scriptures, even without note or comment, provided they were left to them-

\* Book of Homilies, p. 6. Oxford Edition, 1802.



selves. But, then, they will not be left to themselves. False teachers are abroad;—men, whose rank in life necessarily subjects the lower orders to their society and influence; men, ever eager to spread heresy or enthusiasm; men who, with that view, would anxiously avail themselves of any religious impression that might be produced on an uninformed mind by the perusal of the Scriptures, to insinuate pestilent opinions; who would misinterpret the sacred text, pervert the unguarded reader, and thus render the records of truth an instrument of dangerous error. Even total ignorance may be a less evil than a knowledge so capable of abuse. Or, at least, it may be better that the poor should run a somewhat greater risk of being without the Bible altogether, than that they should run the risks inseparable from a possession of the uninterpreted Bible, while surrounded by such interpreters.

“It must needs be (said the Highest of Authorities) that offences come.” That is, we humbly presume, not that they are the subjects of direct pre-ordination, or result from a fatal fitness in the constitution of things; but that they may be calculated upon, as the natural fruits of a corrupt world,—that they are founded in that moral necessity which is only the sad self-consistence of human nature. In the same manner, we may calculate upon the existence of false doctrine, heresy, and schism; they are, and they always have been, but too prevalent. In assigning, however, the actual amount of these evils at any given time, very different estimates may be formed; nor can we pretend to partake in that liveliness of alarm, as to their present prevalence, which is felt by some persons, and on which the objection we are considering proceeds. But that is a question which it may not be necessary to settle. For, granting the objector all he can wish,—

surrendering to him the premises of his argument in full,—it will still appear that we have not made the remotest approach to his conclusions.

False teachers, the argument says, are abroad; and therefore we must be cautious how we distribute the unexpounded Bible. Now, if the result of withholding the Bible were to withhold the false teacher also,—if, by restricting the circulation of the records of truth, we restrained at the same time the propagation of falsehood and error,—if the sending (as our present author and others have recommended) all our Bibles to foreign parts, had the effect of banishing all our heretics and enthusiasts to foreign parts also,—there might then be some meaning in this argument. For it might then be plausibly maintained that we should do better to expose our poorer brethren to the chance of perishing for lack of knowledge, than to the certainty of being seduced into an abuse of knowledge;—or, in other words, we should rather expose them to the chance of losing themselves in the dark, than to the certainty of being misled in broad day. But the misfortune is, that the argument proceeds on a supposition precisely contrary to all this. By the very supposition of the argument, the lower classes are surrounded by deceiving guides *whom we cannot remove from them*. By the very supposition of the argument, therefore, though the Bible is taken away, the false teacher is left behind. That is, we may withdraw the words of truth, but we leave behind the words of falsehood. These wily deluders,—these seducers with their thousand arts,—these apostles of mischief,—cannot be expected to lose their persuasive powers, because the poor lose their Bibles. Familiar as the argument represents them to be with the common people, and always having access to them, and always on the alert, they must have innumerable modes of

producing impression which would still remain unimpaired. What then would be gained by the absence of the Bible?

Magnify the obscurities and difficulties of that sacred volume as we will,—still it must have *some* tendency to enlighten the vulgar, *some* profitableness for the instruction of the ignorant and the reproof of the sinful, *some* power of making the foolish wise unto salvation. The poor man, whose eyes were on the Bible, while his ears were assailed by heretical deceptions, could not but sometimes feel the contrast between the text and the commentary. The misrepresenting teacher would not fare the better for being confronted with that which he misrepresented. What then, we repeat, would be gained by the absence of the Bible? *Gained?* What rather would not be *lost*? For, evidently, the question no longer is, whether the lower classes shall run the risk of losing their way in the dark or being deluded in broad day, but whether or not they shall be subjected to the double ruin of darkness and delusion at once.

It may materially strengthen this view of the subject, to reflect that no system we can adopt will take the Scriptures from the hands of these alleged false teachers, however we may succeed in withholding them from the persons who are to be taught. The heretic will still possess them; and, by dealing them out to his hearers in such portions as may suit his designs,—by exhibiting in a detached state passages justly intelligible only in their connection,—by tearing text from context, doctrine from practice, and feeling from doctrine,—will indeed be able to distort and dislocate the rule of life into an engine of destruction. This is not matter of surmise, but of experience. Before the Reformation, the most grievous errors corrupted the reli-

gion and morality of the Christian world. How did those errors originate, and how were they established? They were produced, and they were confirmed, mainly by this, that certain privileged persons had the Bible in their hands, while the bulk of the people had it not. The laity knew the Scriptures only from such partial views of them as the hierarchy were pleased to afford. The essence of the mischief, therefore, consisted, not in complete suppression, but in garbled disclosure. And how, on the other hand, was this unhappy system subverted? Not by contending against it with its own weapons, or arraying against it its own arts; not by rival garblings or a counter-monopoly; but by entire and unreserved and uncompromising publication; by giving truth a full and a fair field; by calling on all men to search the Scriptures; and by rendering the Scriptures intelligible to all, that they might be searched.

It was therefore justly said by Chillingworth, that **THE BIBLE ONLY** is the religion of Protestants; and this emphatic declaration has very naturally been appealed to by the advocates of the Bible Society. The Bishop of Carlisle, however, now assures his clergy, that the declaration of Chillingworth could never have been so appealed to, had it been properly understood; and, to prove this, he exhibits it with the context at large, and adds a *commentary* of his own. To avoid any imputation of unfairness, we will readily transcribe both text and commentary:—

“You have heard much of a notable saying of the learned and acute Chillingworth, ‘that the Bible only is the religion of Protestants.’ We all will readily join in the declaration. But this has been unwarrantably brought forward occasionally in aid of the Bible Society, as if we would deny it, or explain it away, and as if Chillingworth was pleading for the distribution of Bibles without note or comment, accord-



ing to the present view of things. He had not an idea of it. He was contending against the practice of the Romish Church, in extolling the traditions which had been received, as of equal authority with the written word, and in thus adopting both a written and unwritten word of God, and in short making the doctrines of the Council of Trent, and not the Bible, the rule of faith. In this respect his argument was invincible, and sufficient too; as it obviated all the particulars of the case about which the dispute was held. But his great name, with regard to the use of the Bible without note or comment, ought not to have any farther application, than to this his expressly intended respect and reference.

"Judge ye yourselves :

"It is in the Sixth Book of Chillingworth's prudent and immortal work on the religion of Protestants, where he is particularly contending that Protestants are not heretics, that this notable saying of his is to be found. 'It remains now,' saith he to his opponent, 'that I should shew, that many reasons of moment may be alleged for the justification of Protestants, which are dissembled by you, and not put into the balance. Know then, sir, that when I say, the religion of Protestants is in prudence to be preferred before yours; as on the one side, I do not understand by *your* religion, the doctrine of Bellarmine or Baronius, or any other private man amongst you, nor the doctrine of the Sorbonne, or of the Jesuits, or of the Dominicans, or of any other particular company among you, but that wherein you all agree, or profess to agree, *the doctrine of the Council of Trent*: so accordingly, on the other side, by *the religion of Protestants*, I do not understand the doctrine of Luther, or Calvin, or Melancthon, nor the Confession of Augusta, or Geneva, nor the Catechism of Heidelberg, nor the Articles of the Church of England, nor the Harmony of the Protestant Confessions; but that wherein all agree, and which they all subscribe with a greater harmony, as a perfect rule of their faith and actions; that is, **THE BIBLE**. **THE BIBLE**, I say, **THE BIBLE ONLY** is the religion of Protestants. Whatsoever else they believe besides it, and the plain irrefragable indubitable consequences of it, well may they hold it as a matter of opinion; but as matter of faith and religion, neither can they with coherence to their own grounds, believe it themselves, nor require the belief of it of others, without

Christ. Observ. No. 181.

most high and most schismatical presumption.' Chap. 6. Part i. Sect. 56.

"And now what is the intent of the whole of this celebrated passage? To rebut Roman-Catholic arguments, and the upholding of the Council of Trent as a rule of faith: to oppose the Bible to tradition; the revelations of God to the decrees of men. But there was not an idea of the unexplained Bible's terminating any difference, which might have arisen between Bellarmine and the doctors of the Sorbonne, and the Jesuits or the Dominicans amongst themselves: nor any difference which may subsist between the various companies of Protestants one with another. The whole design is to place the Bible in contradistinction to the Romish authorities, to the doctrines of the Council of Trent." pp. 12-14.

It must be conceded to the right reverend author, that Chillingworth was not, directly or specifically, recommending the system, in support of which he has been cited. The expediency of an associated distribution of the sacred text was not the question immediately in his view, when he wrote the celebrated passage under consideration. But neither was that the question immediately in the view of Lactantius, when he wrote a passage which the Bishop has elsewhere referred to as pointedly applicable to the subject. This example, then, proves that an eminent departed writer may very fairly be appealed to as an authority in a question of which "*he had not an idea*;" though certainly it does not prove that the appeal will necessarily be successful.

With what effect the learned prelate objects to the appeal now in question, will best be perceived by conceding the truth of all that he says respecting Chillingworth's sentiments. Chillingworth, it seems, did not mean to set up the unexpounded Bible as decisive of the questions in dispute among Protestants. Chillingworth, therefore, is not to be quoted as an authority

for the circulation of the unexpounded Bible with such a view. And, consequently, Chillingworth is not to be quoted as an authority for the Bible Society. Such is this argument;—founded most manifestly on the assumption that the great object of the Bible Society is the decision of the points disputed among Protestants. To which we answer, that, if any other than orthodox Protestants be meant—such as the old Anabaptists, or the modern Unitarians—then Chillingworth would undoubtedly have held the unexpounded Bible to be as conclusive against such persons as against the Catholics; and consequently, the author's premises fail. But, if orthodox Protestants only be meant, then the decision of the disputes among such persons is not, nor ever was, nor ever was said to be, the leading object of the Bible Society; nor even one of its leading objects; nor even (properly speaking) an object with it at all; and consequently, the author is fighting against pure shadows.

It is not the *resolution of Protestant controversies*, but the *reconciliation of Protestant hearts*, which has formed (even collaterally) an object with the Bible Society. Our aim is not to *join* true Christians on the grounds where they differ, but to *bind* them on the grounds where they agree. This distinction was long since pointed out by Mr. Vansittart, in his admirable Letter on this subject, and is perfectly familiar to every thinking member of the Bible Society. Possibly, the determination of many controversial points will ultimately be the effect of the Society's labours in circulating the Scriptures. But the contemplation of such an effect has never entered as one among the *moving* causes of the undertaking; and the undertaking may be completely successful, though such an effect should never follow.

It is plain, therefore, that the objection of the learned author, on this occasion, can be sustained only by

misapprehending either Chillingworth or the Bible Society, or both. It follows that some more tenable ground of argument must be sought for, if the patronage of that eminent name is still to be denied to the Society; and, in the meanwhile, and till such argument is adduced, we shall continue to believe, and to maintain, that an institution which circulates *the Bible, and the Bible only*, can neither appeal to an authority more justificatory, nor adopt a motto more appropriate, than the sentiment that *the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants*.

The topics, however, which this reference to Chillingworth has introduced, are such as we do not wish to dismiss with so slight a notice; and, fortunately for us, the course of the observations we shall have to offer on the passage next to be extracted from this Charge, will again bring them under consideration. Mean time, as we have already considered the *general* complaint of the difficulties attending the perusal of Scripture, we are not sorry to meet with the passage in question, which seems intended as some specification of the grounds of that complaint.

“At home, if we would *oppose* the Bible without note or comment, to any description of persons dissenting from our church, we could oppose it to one description of persons alone, even to that same description to which the great Chillingworth opposed it—the Roman Catholics. But in this diocese, who can say that that is at all necessary? Who, of all those who dissent from our Establishment, conduct themselves with such quietness as do those of the Romish Church? We hear by report, that some few of that persuasion are amongst us; but we know it not from any practical troublesomeness on their part, nor even from the slightest alarm that they are given to interfere with the consciences of our people. Truth obliges me to say thus much.

“But if we would *introduce* the Bible to the Protestant divisions, which to our sorrow do so acrimoniously prevail in these our days, of what profit are all



these labours, in distributing the Bible purposely unexplained? We do not introduce the *name* of God; for, surely, that is known to all. We do not introduce the *law* of God; for that is almost in every hand, at least has been sounded, in some degree, in every ear. In introducing the Bible to the divisions which prevail amongst Protestants in general, our chief wish is to teach them, in what sense the words of Scripture are most truly and most faithfully interpreted. But this is a point which has excited the apprehensions of multitudes throughout the kingdom. Their fear is, that Scripture will not be better understood, by the distribution of Bibles without note or comment: but, on the contrary, that encouragement may be given to the wayward mind to wrest it to wrong ideas, perplexing doubts, and hurtful purposes." pp. 15, 16.

It has already been observed, that this passage seems intended to be specific, but it is not very distinct. Writers do not always clear up their meaning by descending into particulars: on the contrary, the obscurity sometimes increases with their descent, and makes us long for the daylight of a few broad generalities. In the paragraphs just quoted, there are several things hard to explain. What sort of an objection it is to the home-proceedings of the Bible Society at large, that there are a few quiet Roman Catholics in the diocese of Carlisle;—why the quietness of Roman Catholics, even supposing them quiet throughout the world, should be any stronger argument against disseminating the Scriptures now, than it would have been before the Reformation, when all were Catholics and all were quiet;—what is meant by "*introducing the Bible to the Protestant divisions*" now prevailing—which, by the way, soon turns out to be no introduction at all;—in what sense, or on what evidence, the law of God is asserted to be almost in every hand, at a time when such numbers of families are known to be destitute of copies of the Bible, and when it is in proof that, till the Bible Society arose, the destitution was even immense;—what conceivable

identity, affinity, or approximation there is between the two propositions, that "the law of God is almost in every hand," and that "it has been sounded, in some degree, in every ear;"—such are some of the questions which the Bishop's remarks suggest, and to which they surely do not afford a ready answer. The least that can be said is, that the passage, in its present state, appears considerably liable "to be wrested," according to its own phrase, "to wrong ideas, perplexing doubts, and hurtful purposes."

If we may freely express our opinion, the passage radically involves that misconception as to the conciliatory purposes of the Bible Society which has already been noticed. It assumes, that the great object of the Society is to reconcile the jarring sentiments of polemics on points of doubtful disputation. This, however, would not have sufficed; for the Society, though acting from an absurd motive, might in fact be answering some very good end. Therefore it was necessary further to assume, that the object before mentioned *could* be the only object of such a society, even at the best. Both assumptions being made accordingly, the argument became complete, and ran thus:—The proper object of circulating the Bible is to make Protestants agree; the unexplained Bible never will make them agree; therefore, the unexplained Bible ought not to be circulated.

In the very act, however, of developing these propositions, it appears to us that the fallacy which they imply partially betrayed itself to the good sense and piety of the author. To hold that the chief end of disseminating the Scriptures is to make Protestants agree, is necessarily to suppose that men are, in essential points, Protestants already; but this again implies, that the Scriptures are either already in their possession, or so completely in their

knowledge, as to make the possession safe; and, if so, the whole argument becomes as absurd as it is useless. In attempting to untwist the horns of this dilemma, which made it equally difficult to maintain that the bulk of the people *had* the Scriptures and that they had them *not*, it would seem that those hesitating positions were resorted to:—1st, The law of God is *almost* in every hand: and 2dly, *At least*, it has been sounded, *in some degree*, in every ear:—statements, however, which, even if they were as correct and as effective as the right reverend author supposes, would only prove that the Bible Society, in doing what has in fact been done already, is acting a part equally harmless and unnecessary.

But these statements suggest a remark which appears to us of far greater importance. The opponents of the Bible Society are apt very strongly to assert their reverence for the sacred Book itself; and we have no right to question, or even to suspect, their sincerity. Let us not, therefore, be understood to speak with any mental reservation, when we say, that it is possible for men to feel and intend excellently, who are yet betrayed by prejudice into a line of acting and of reasoning widely inconsistent with their feelings and intentions. We may be deceived; but it is our opinion that *all* the writers in question have fallen into this error, however undesignedly or unconsciously. Probe their reasoning; and, somewhere or other, it will clearly be found to imply postulates encroaching on the paramount authority of Revelation. Even in the respectable pages of Dr. Wordsworth, it seems to us that this flaw is never effectually covered from view by the “well-seeming and serious minuteness and pomp”\* of his *Hookerian* periods; and, to escape the

same difficulty, Bishop Marsh vainly writhes in all the torture of dialectics. But, in the hands of plainer and less practised controversialists, the defect perhaps discovers itself more quickly. The Country Clergyman, for example, at once finds that the Bible is equally ready to speak Calvinism or Socinianism according to the creed of those by whom it is distributed; and an author to whom we listen with far greater deference, the Bishop of Carlisle, represents the “sounding of the Divine Law, *in some degree*, in men’s ears” as nearly an equivalent for a ready access to the records of that law in all their fulness and purity.

In a passage we have before cited, the Bishop affirms, with a simplicity and a dignity well befitting the episcopal character, that nothing could more readily coincide with the regular purposes and inclinations and endeavours of the long life with which God, in his great mercy, had favoured him, than to spread the word of God in every quarter; so that all, from the least to the greatest, might know God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. The words are solemn, and even affecting; and far from us be the presumptuous uncharitableness of doubting the perfect truth of a declaration which, so made and on such an occasion, must be considered as a humble but deliberate appeal to the Searcher of hearts. But the venerable authority of age and station ought not to screen from censure those errors which it only renders doubly dangerous: nor are such errors likely to be the less injurious, because they are committed inadvertently. We must be allowed, therefore, with respectful but with honest freedom, to protest against the unfounded and hazardous statement, that it makes but a slight shade of difference whether men have in their hands the Divine Law in its undivided entireness, or merely hear it, “*at least, in some*

\* Dr. Wordsworth's Reply, p. 68.



*degree*, sounded in their ears." It is an immense chasm which these slight words, "at least," "in some degree," are here employed to bridge over;—no less than the interval between the great Protestant principle of the importance of an integral Scripture, and the pretended sufficiency of that partial and uncertain sounding of truth, in which has originated almost all the corrupt Christianity since the days of the Gnostics.

Since, however, the chief ground of objection against the Bible Society, after all, is, that the circulation of the unexpounded Bible can produce no effect on the state of sects, we will endeavour to deliver our sentiments on this subject in a more expanded form than we have yet had the opportunity of doing. It will, of course, be understood that we mean to express only our own views and opinions, without presuming to answer for those of the Society at large. What we have to offer, may be couched in three very plain propositions:—

1. In disseminating the word of God, it is the object of the Society to oppose false doctrine and heresy, as well as vice and immorality, by whatever name covered, or in whatever denomination of Christians to be found.

Bishop Goodenough thinks that the only persuasion of Christians to whom the Bible, without note or comment, can be opposed with effect, is that of the Roman Catholics. From this opinion we beg leave totally to dissent; having the firmest conviction that the Sacred Volume plainly and broadly testifies against all such fallacy of doctrine as amounts to heterodoxy, and all such error of conduct as amounts to irreligion; and that these strong-holds of corruption, in whatever sect they may be found, it is mighty to pull down. In the distribution of that volume, therefore, our opposition is not directed against any specific church or creed, as such, but against

all false churches and false creeds; against all impiety and atheism, speculative or practical; against Deism as a system of fatal defectiveness; against Antinomianism as a system of horrible perversion; against evil, both in its essence and in its effects; against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Surely, the anxiety of argument betrayed the right reverend prelate into an oversight, when he laid down so broad a proposition as that we have just disputed. With whatever obscurity the sacred Scriptures may be thought to express themselves respecting those minor points on which orthodox Christians differ, it can never be contended that they doubtfully, or only by circuitous inference, condemn those more important perversions of faith which are generally proscribed by the consent of the reformed creeds. Points of discipline, or forms of worship, are perhaps matters of elaborate deduction; but the great articles of faith and practice—those cardinal truths which the Socinian, the Pelagian, or the Antinomian, have vainly attempted, by means of their notes and comments, to explain away—he that runs may read. No expository learning is wanted to elicit the meaning of that simple statement, *The Word was God, and the Word was made flesh*. No voluminous commentary need be resorted to, for the elucidation of that plain negation, *Not of works, lest any man should boast*. No mighty mass of annotations is requisite to illustrate the force of that direct question, *If any man say that he hath faith, and have not works, can faith save him?*

Will it be urged as any argument against the clearness of Scripture on these great points, that there are those whom its declarations respecting them, however simple or direct, have

failed to convince? The fathers of the church have never considered the prevalence of scepticism, or false doctrine, as a proof of the difficulty or doubtfulness of Revelation. "Those things which are perspicuous in themselves, are hard to heretics; for how should wisdom find entrance into an ill-disposed mind?" Such are the sterling words of St. Cyril: they are therefore entitled to the greatest attention; nor, in the estimate of those who revere the authority of talent and piety, will they lose any of their weight from the circumstance of having been adopted by Bishop Jewell.

2. In supporting, therefore, the Bible Society, we admit it to be our object to oppose all capital or considerable perversions of Christian truth and morals. This is the first of our three positions. The second is, that it is *not* our object to oppose those minor errors which may consist with holding the essential articles of Revelation.

In the observance of this distinction, we humbly conceive ourselves to be acting in strict consonance with the principle which the Bishop of Carlisle himself cites from Chillingworth, and cites with the fullest approbation. It is our object to make known the *essence* of Christianity; and nothing seems to deserve that name but that which the Bible teaches, either by explicit statement, or by "plain, irrefragable, indubitable" inference. Nor is it of any moment in this place to determine what are, and what are not, the vital or cardinal parts of Revelation; so long as it is admitted that whatever is not revealed with sufficient clearness to strike the perception of a sincere and unperverted inquirer, is for that very reason *not* vital or cardinal, and, consequently, that the diffusion of the Bible will of itself secure to such inquirers the knowledge of truths really essential, and of these only.

3. But, thirdly, though the circulation of the Bible, without note or comment, may not *insure* the knowledge of minor truths, (and what is it that *will* insure such knowledge?)—and though the determination of non-essential questions is not our *object*,—yet this by no means precludes us from hoping that a more general acquaintance with the sacred books may ultimately produce the effect of clearing up many points, now disputed among equally sincere and, in essential matters, equally orthodox professors of Christianity.

To indulge in sanguine expectations of the establishment of a perfect catholic consent throughout Christendom, would be rash and unreasonable; unless indeed such expectations can be made to stand on a fair interpretation of that word of prophecy, which is itself a miracle, and to the fulfilment of which a miracle, if necessary, will never be wanting. But right reason does not pronounce it to be impossible that many controversies, which now divide the world, should one day be disposed of; and if on other subjects, why not with respect to points of theology? "Time (says Cicero,) which effaces the fictions of opinion, enforces and confirms the conclusions of truth." In realizing this pleasing prospect, if it is ever to be realized, doubtless we may look for much to be accomplished by the arguments of learned and candid and pious expositors of Scripture: in other words, comments and notes may here be expected to prove very effective. But we may rely on it as the surest of all axioms, that the basis of a catholic consent, at whatever time and in whatever degree it shall take place, must be laid in a deep and universal knowledge of the Divine Volume itself, and can be laid in nothing else; and that there cannot be a more radical mistake than to suppose, that we shall reconcile opinions by fearing



to allow them free scope, or promote the adoption of a common scheme of exposition by shewing ourselves jealous of the text which is to be expounded.

These then are our three propositions:—It is an object with us to circulate essential and fundamental truths: it is *not* an absolute object with us, to circulate truths not essential: but we do not exclude the hope that this also may be an ultimate effect of our labours. In so speaking, we give only our own views; but it is certainly our belief that, on these grounds, we should be met by a great majority of the members of the Bible Society.

And this course of remark naturally conducts us to the only topic on which we have yet to trouble the reader. Why should the Bishop of Carlisle be apprehensive that the Bible Society will injure the interests of our national establishment? In his view, as in ours, the Church of England, both in essentials and in less important respects, is built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. Is it possible, then, that the abundant dissemination of the apostolic and prophetic writings should impair the influence of that establishment? Or will a close inspection of the massy foundation, teach men to distrust the solidity of the lofty superstructure?

In the eyes of an impartial observer, the system of the Bible Society would probably appear peculiarly agreeable to the genius of the Church of England. That church has attached no comments inseparably to the sacred text, for the mischievous consequences of such a policy had been made sufficiently flagrant by history. Neither is it her principle to supply copies of the Bible for the individual use of the numerous population comprised within the sphere of her influence; for (among other objections) the provisions of funds for such an object would have been impracticable. But, neither supplying such copies nor

annexing such comments, she yet loudly and authoritatively enjoins on all her followers the private and domestic perusal of the holy Scriptures. Of course, all are bound to procure copies, who *can*; and, if they cannot, into what imagination could it enter, that they violate any duty, moral or ecclesiastical, by obtaining assistance for so excellent a purpose from the benevolence of their brethren?

It has, however, been contended that the Dissenters who have joined the Bible Society, must naturally indulge the expectation that the proceedings of that institution will operate, however silently and gradually, the supercession of the Church of England; and that this is good reason why a churchman should tremble. Even admitting, however, for the sake of argument, that such an expectation is entertained by the persons in question, on what grounds should a conscientious churchman adopt the same opinion? The Society is severely confined to the use of a single weapon—the holy Scriptures:—from such a weapon, what has a scriptural church to dread? The hopes and anticipations of the separatist may perhaps be very consistent;—possibly he believes that the Bible will be against the church, because he believes that the church is against the Bible. But why should *we*, who dissent from his belief on the one point, concur with it at the same moment on the other? Why should we commit the monstrous contradiction of pronouncing his hopes to be well-founded, though we know the only foundation on which they rest to be sand? Or, in other words, while we flatly deny his premises, why should we obstinately embrace his conclusion?

Some distinguished advocates of the Bible Society have suggested a consideration on this subject which well merits the attention of the candid. If the coalition of Churchmen and Dissenters in the Bible Society imports any concession on either

side, it is on that of the Dissenters ; since it is only the authorized version of the Scriptures which the Society circulates in this country. The slightest reflection will shew the correctness of this remark. Our national translation, being the work of Churchmen, is naturally tinged with an ecclesiastical phraseology, which, with whatever propriety adopted, cannot be supposed altogether pleasing to a Non-conformist. Many of the Dissenters, perhaps, would be disposed to banish the word *bishop*, which so frequently occurs, and to substitute some term less forcibly conveying hierarchical associations. The Baptists contend that the Greek words rendered *baptize*, *baptism*, and *baptist*, should rather have been translated *immerse*, *immersion*, and *immerser*. These terms, they allege, would have been more critically exact ; and it is plain that the familiar use of them in the English New Testament would have afforded a *prima facie* argument against baptism by sprinkling, which the adoption of the technical terms employed in their stead has the effect of excluding. It is no question with us, what may be the validity of such objections to the national Bible ; but the members of the church will act only candidly in remembering that such objections are in fact *waved* by the separatists who subscribe to the Bible Society.

These remarks apply with peculiar force to one division of persons calling themselves Christians, who have, in a few instances, joined the Society, and whose junction with it, partial as it has been, has occasioned much discussion and animadversion. It is not necessary to inform our readers that, from all the distinctive tenets of the *Socinians*, the creed of the Christian Observer is completely "alien and abhorrent." The motives and the consciences of men must be left to the judgment of a Higher Tribunal, but their avowed principles are

matters of human cognizance. Concerning these we have formed a very decisive opinion in the case of the persons in question ; and the result is, that no sect, religious or anti-religious, exists, with whom we hold so little communion of doctrine, or sympathy of sentiment ;—" *Nulla nobis cum illis societas, sed potius summa distractio* ;"—yet with this exception, that we feel no scruple in supporting warmly an institution to which a few of them contribute ; for the truth is, that, in this truly "novel union and combination," the compromise of consistency is not on our part, but on theirs. The orthodox Christian no more surrenders his faith to Priestley or to Belsham, by uniting his subscriptions for such a purpose with those of a Socinian, than, by uniting them with the donations of Jews and Mohammedans (both of which classes have occasionally contributed to the Bible Society,) he professes to embrace the legends of the Talmud or the Koran. On the contrary, nothing can be clearer than that it is the Jew, the Socinian, and the Mohammedan, who make the concession in such a case, by assisting in the dissemination of a system of religious doctrine which all of them pronounce to be false and idolatrous.

The Bishop of Carlisle is pleased to declare, that the unexplained Bible cannot successfully be "opposed" to any division of English Dissenters, except the Roman Catholics. The Socinians, therefore, are not to be excepted. But, perhaps, the Socinians may themselves be the best judges on this subject ; and, when it is remembered of the acknowledged leaders of that sect, that, not content with placing the sacred text under a heavy guard of notes, comments, and glosses of all descriptions, they deem it expedient to expunge one half of it, and to misconstrue the other, some idea may be formed what sort of an



"opponent" the Socinians have found in the unexplained Bible.

The "Country Clergyman," in his Address to Lord Teignmouth, is pleased to observe, that "the Socinian will make his Bible speak and spread Socinianism." Most truly he *will*—so far, at least, as the New Testament is concerned; the "Improved Version" of which affords a tolerable proof, both of the *willingness* of the Socinian for the purpose described, and also what sort of *making* the holy Scriptures will take, before they become proficient in talking Socinianism.\*

Besides the injurious effects anticipated from the union and combination of Churchmen and Dissenters, there are certain other grounds on which the Bishop of Carlisle founds his conclusion of danger to the church from the Bible Society. At the meetings, public or private, of the Society, "many unwarrantable things are often said, reflecting upon our church or its ministers."

The complaint is not new; but it is now, for the first time, adopted by a person who has any tolerable right

\* The Socinian version of the New Testament has drawn many able advocates of the faith into the field. We have formerly noticed among these, the deeply learned and powerful publication of the Bishop of St. David's; than whom no prelate has deserved better of the church, or of the Bible Society. It has lately been our happiness to read the enlarged remarks of Dr. Magee, the Dean of Cork, on the same subject, as contained in the new edition of his work on the Scripture Doctrines of Atonement and Sacrifice. This masterly writer does indeed assail the enemy ἐγγὺς τε μεγάλῳ καὶ χερὶ παχείῃ. His hand is as crushing as that of Horsley. We cannot help recommending to the learned and orthodox reader this specimen of victorious ratiocination. At the same time, a doubt may, perhaps, be entertained whether the author might not advantageously have tempered his truly Bentleian vigour of disquisition and argument with somewhat more forbearance of manner. It is, however, but fair to refer the reader to the author's own defence on this point. See Vol. II. part i. p. 412.

Christ. Observ. No. 181.

to urge it. To former accusers we should only apply the words of the fabulist:—

"Sua quisque exempla debet æquo animo pati."

The Bible Society has been deliberately stigmatized as a conspiracy against the Church of England.—The charge necessarily imputed the grossest wickedness and hypocrisy to one part of the subscribers, the most despicable folly and rashness to the rest. Between these alternatives, if the parties accused were, in any instance, betrayed into expressions of impatience or resentment, yet surely it did not exactly lie in the mouth of their accusers to rebuke them. It would be a little hard to fall on men with the heaviest criminalations, and then blame them for crying out. The truth, however, is, that the assailants have had nothing to complain of, beyond the ordinary sharpness of polemical encounter, which, however deserving of repression, widely differs from a moral accusation. The forbearance, in particular, of the Dissenting members of the Society, under the rude attacks in question, has been beyond praise. The Bishop of Carlisle is pleased to assert, that, at the public meetings of the Society, unwarrantable reflections are often cast on the church and its ministers. In giving such accounts of scenes where, we regret to say, he has never been present, a little more caution might have been requisite. Of *some* of the ministers of the church—namely, of those ministers who have falsely accused the Society and *all* its members in a body—strong complaints may sometimes have been made; and we only wish they had been made unwarrantably. But, when it is asserted that reflections are habitually cast at those meetings on the church, or on its members as such, we positively deny the truth of the charge. We positively deny

that such reflections have habitually, or frequently, or occasionally, or (we believe we might add) ever been made at those meetings; and, if the accusation is persisted in, let the evidence be produced.

Probably the right reverend prelate, whose language is not always the most precise, intended his complaint to apply, not to the meetings of the general society, but to those of minor associations. At one or two of these, an instance may possibly have occurred of sentiments indiscreetly expressed; but, considering the number of these associations, we are well persuaded that such instances have been extremely rare—so rare as to be in fact evanescent—and that the reports which have been circulated of them are shameful exaggerations. It is to be feared that the Bishop may have been misled by the writings of *one* conspicuous disputant on the subject of the Bible Society:—a person, whose disingenuous perseverance in charges confessedly founded on *anonymous* information, after the parties affected by such charges have flatly denied them, and have challenged him for his proofs, ought for ever to exclude him from the pale of honourable controversy. Why then should those, who would disdain to follow his example, condescend to rely on his authority?

In taking our leave of the Bishop of Carlisle on this occasion, we certainly cannot but admire the general good temper with which (mistaken as we deem him) his Charge is composed; but must, at the same time, acknowledge that the satisfaction which the *manner* of his address

afforded is much more than compensated by our regret at the opinions it contains. We feel afresh afflicted by every new instance in which a prelate of the English Church commits the weight of his authority in opposition to such a cause; and sincerely should we rejoice, if the right reverend person, on whose work we have been animadverting, could be induced to re-consider and *re-cast* his sentiments on this most important subject. The Bishop speaks with much piety of the long life with which he has been favoured. No circumstance, we presume to think, would crown that life with a happier termination, than his concurrence, even yet, in the measures which he has so unhappily condemned. Not wholly declining to entertain this hope, may we be allowed, in conclusion, respectfully to set before him a striking declaration from one of the most venerable of his brethren, in the Episcopate of another communion, the Archbishop Metropolitan of the Russian Greek Church:—“It is extremely pleasing and gratifying to every Christian, and *particularly* TO EVERY CHRISTIAN BISHOP, to share in the sacred intentions of so beneficent a community: the object of which is, to spread among the people of the earth the salutary light of Divine Revelation; to illumine their understandings, not with earthly, but with heavenly and spiritual, wisdom; to form their hearts to the laws of God; and to extend and consolidate the kingdom of Jesus Christ.”\*

\* Owen's History of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Vol. II. p. 426.

## REVIEW OF REVIEWS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

Hawthorn Hill, Bracknell, Berks,  
Dec. 13th, 1816.

SIR—From the respect I enter-

tain for the professed objects of your publication, it is painful to me to *impute* unfairness to it on a subject closely connected with those



objects. If the Reviewer of my work in your last Number (which has just reached me) had stated the nature of my argument against Mr. Malthus with the same fairness as he has stated that of Mr. Malthus himself, I should have had no reason to complain, whatever the conclusion might have been. But when, after a clear and concise statement of Mr. Malthus's argument, he proceeds (I presume through inadvertence) to misstate and misrepresent mine, entirely avoiding the *real* and *obvious* point of difference between us; however I might be tempted to feel gratification as an author, I do feel much sorrow as a man, anxious only for the discovery of truth on a subject deeply affecting the temporal and eternal interests of mankind. In support of the imputation I have made, I think that I might refer to almost every page in the part of the Review yet published; but I will be satisfied with pointing out to you one instance only. In p. 736, I am asserted "to ADMIT DISTINCTLY the tendency of population to *increase indefinitely*, while the productive powers of the earth are limited!" And this assertion is supported by a quotation, beginning at the middle of a sentence in the 107th page of my work, and which, WHEN THUS TAKEN, appears to convey such an admission. But I beg you, as a fair and impartial man, to refer to that page of my work, and you will find the passage to be *no admission* on my part, but merely an hypothetical statement of an adversary's argument made at the outset of a chapter, which I immediately devote the whole of the same chapter to answer. Surely, sir, such a mode of making out a case is unworthy of a journal professing your principles. I must add, too, that it is the less excusable, inasmuch as, among the many imperfections of my work, it can scarcely be accused of not having shewn, very fully, that its OBJECT is almost

exclusively to *disprove* Mr. Malthus's assertion concerning the *indefinite increase of population*. To endeavour, therefore, to fix upon me a contradiction, by falsely stating that I FULLY ADMITTED *such increase*, is a course of criticism which I should scarcely have expected to discover in your journal. I wish I could say that the instance now pointed out is the only one of the same nature in the article to which I refer.

Having taken up my pen, I am induced to trouble you with a very few words concerning the *real* nature of my argument in opposition to Mr. Malthus. I admit that his principles give (as your Reviewer expresses himself) "a clear and elementary view" of the subject, *as the author sees it*; and if his view were the *true one*, this would be a great advantage. But if it be *untrue*, I apprehend that the philosophical and imposing manner in which it is advanced only renders it the more dangerous. Now I have ventured to deny its TRUTH, in one of its fundamental propositions—viz. that the *natural force* of the principle of population, *if left perfectly free*, is *capable* of doubling the actually existing numbers of people as rapidly in the advanced states of society as in the American Colonies;—and I have stated, that I believe the gratuitous assumption of this *capability* to be the great deception advanced in Mr. Malthus's work. It necessarily leads his readers, and has in fact led many of them, to suppose that the *natural force* of the principle of population, as established by the Creator, is greater than in fact it is; and to despair of the efficacy of any moral means of ameliorating the condition of mankind in opposition to it, when the powers of the soil become contracted from full cultivation. The TRUTH or falsehood, however, of the proposition, and not its consequences, or the mode of enunciating it, is the real question. I have endeavoured to

impeach its truth, by shewing that *that* only can properly be said to be *natural* to a moral agent of which he is morally or physically capable;—that as society advances, *through all its gradations*, from the early stage observed in the American Colonies, man *does certainly* become physically and morally *less capable* of increasing his numbers, although left to the free operation of his own will; until at length, at a high point of civilization, the natural force of the principle of population *may probably* become incapable of further increasing the existing number of people.—*Therefore*, I believe that Mr. Malthus's assumption is *untrue*, that man continues “to the end of time” equally capable of doubling his numbers, so far as the *natural force of the principle of population is concerned*.

This, sir, is my STATEMENT in its elementary parts. I have endeavoured to prove it in a variety of ways, and to draw it out into consequences; most of them, I venture to hope, favourable to the *religion*, the *morals*, and the *happiness* of mankind, according to the plain and rational meaning of those terms. If my statement be *true*, it seems also to relieve the subject from one of the most appalling difficulties under which it previously laboured—viz. the alleged *extreme* disproportion between the *natural* power of the soil to produce further food on the one side, and the *natural* power of the principle of population on the other, as the former evidently becomes contracted in the advanced stages of society. I confess that my imagination fails in conceiving any *moral means* by which this *extreme natural disproportion* (as it is frequently asserted by Mr. Malthus) can possibly be reconciled, consistently with the revealed will of God to man.

I wish, sir, for nothing more than to see the question *fairly stated*, and *fairly met*; and I have unfeignedly rejoiced at seeing it lately so treated by persons who in some respects dissent from my opinions.

Having now trepassed at great length upon your attention, I shall omit or defer many other observations which press upon my mind; and only add, that you are at liberty to print this letter in the next Number of your journal, or to throw it into the fire, as to your candour may seem best.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your humble servant,

JOHN WEYLAND, jun.

P. S. I think it fair to state, that I retain a copy of this letter, which I consider myself entitled to hold at my own disposal, according to circumstances.

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We confess ourselves to be not a little surprised at the tone of the preceding letter. We admit that we mistook, and therefore inadvertently mistated, Mr. Weyland's meaning in one passage, and we exceedingly regret the mistake. But surely no impartial reader will infer, from the general tenor of our Review of his work, that it was not our wish to treat Mr. Weyland with the respect to which he is most justly entitled, and which we really feel for his character and talents; or that we could have any view, in the part we have taken in this discussion, except the promotion of sound knowledge on a very important question.

Mr. Weyland ought in fairness to have waited until he had seen the second as well as the first part of our Review, before he proceeded in a strain of so much irritation to animadvert upon it generally. He would, in that case, have found every essential part of his system brought forward, in a manner which ought to satisfy him, because it is done chiefly in his own language. We must in candour add, that nothing contained in his letter has in the slightest degree altered our sentiments on the questions at issue between him and Mr. Malthus, or led us to think, that, with the ex-



ception of the error already acknowledged, we have done him the slightest wrong. Mr. Weyland, indeed, insinuates that there are similar mistakes in every page of the first part of the Review. We think he must have been betrayed by the warmth of his feelings into the

sweeping generality of this intimation. But if otherwise, and that he will take the trouble to point out those other errors to which he alludes, and of which he professes to be satisfied with pointing out only one instance, we shall be very ready to correct them.

## LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTELLIGENCE, *&c. &c.*

### GREAT BRITAIN.

IN the press:—Lay sermons, by Mr. Coleridge, addressed to the Middle and Labouring Classes on the present Distresses of the Country;—Letters from the late Mrs. Carter, to the late Mrs. Montagu, in two volumes 8vo.;—Sermons by the Rev. John Martin, more than forty years Pastor of the Baptist Church in Keppel-street, in 2 volumes;—Biblical Criticisms on the Books of the Old Testament, and Translations of Sacred Songs, with Notes Critical and Explanatory, by the late Bishop Horsley;—A New Volume of Poems by Mr. Leigh Hunt;—Sermons on the Offices and Character of Jesus Christ, by the Rev. T. Bowdler, M. A.;—An Account of the Island of Jersey, by W. Plees, many years resident in the Island: with Engravings;—A Tour through Belgium along the Rhine, and through the North of France, by James Mitchell, M. A.;—The Second Volume of Mr. Southey's History of Brazil;—No. II. of Stephens' Greek Thesaurus;—The First Volume of "The Annual Obituary," containing, 1. Memoirs of celebrated Men who have died within the year 1816. 2. Neglected Biography. 3. Analyses of recent Biographical Works. 4. An Alphabetical List of all the Persons who have died within the British Dominions;—A Volume of Sermons, by the late Rev. Dr. Vincent, Dean of Westminster; with an Account of his Life, by the Rev. Archdeacon Nares;—Female Scripture Biography, by the Rev. F. A. Cox, A. M.

A Memoir of the Life of Dr. Claudius Buchanan, late Vice-Provost of the College of Fort William, and the well-known author of several valuable works on the Moral and Religious state of our Asiatic Dominions, has been prepared from au-

thentic documents by the Rev. Hugh Pearson, M. A. of Oxford, and is now printing in two volumes 8vo.

The first Number of a Work, called the Correspondent, which will be continued every two months, appeared on the 1st instant: its price is 5s. It consists of Letters, Moral, Political, and Literary, between eminent persons in France and England; and is designed, by presenting to each nation a faithful picture of the other, to enlighten both to their true interests, promote a mutual good understanding between them, and render peace the source of a common prosperity. They have been long kept in ignorance of each other's true characters and attainments. The revolutionary governments of France pursued a settled policy of animosity and rancour; and, by means of the interruption of communication, the absolute slavery of the continental press, and the regular employment of hired libellers, succeeded in misrepresenting the views and conduct of England. On our side, we have also been accustomed to view France with much prejudice; and what there has been to admire in her, has been thrown into the shade by the prominence of objects creating only horror or disgust. In short, ignorant travellers, factious journalists, the mistakes of the prejudiced, and the artifices of the malevolent, have left the two nations in a great degree blind to each other's real merits, mutually suspicious and mutually deceived. To correct these misconceptions, is the object of the Correspondent, which will contain about an equal proportion of the letters of French and English writers; the whole of which will appear in English at London, and in French at Paris. It is scarcely possible to enumerate all the sub-

jects which such a work will embrace. Whatever is interesting in morals, in politics, or literature, will fall within the scope of its plan, provided it be drawn from authentic documents, or indisputable testimony. The English Editor is Dr. Stoddart, a name well known in both countries, as having already rendered essential service by his pen to the cause of truth, order, and rational liberty. The number which has already appeared, gives a fair promise of future usefulness and success. The English articles, besides a very able introductory paper, consist of letters on the complaints of agricultural and commercial distress in England; on the municipal corporations of England, and on the corporation of London in particular; on the life of John Wesley, the founder of the English Methodists; on the political societies formed in Germany during the period of Bonaparte's despotism; on the affairs of Spain; on Junius. The French translated articles are, on the royalists of Brittany, and the marquis de la Rouerie; on the terms Liberal Ideas and Ultra Royalists; on the electoral colleges and chamber of deputies; on the means of eradicating mendicity; on the state of parties in France; on the revision of the French code; on the proceedings of the present Chamber of Deputies and on Fouché's letter to the Duke of Wellington. These papers, in general, are distinguished by their ability and great extent of information. We were particularly struck with the life of John Wesley, and the letter on the affairs of Spain. In short, we have no hesitation in warmly recommending the work to all our readers who take an interest in the very momentous subjects which are here treated of, or who are anxious to aid the truly laudable and patriotic objects for which it has been set on foot; namely, the promotion between England and France of that spirit of union which is the true bond of national peace.

A Work has been regularly published, for some years past, at the beginning of each year, entitled, "Time's Telescope," comprising a great variety of miscellaneous and scientific information. The volume for the present year contains, a complete guide to the Almanac for the year; astronomical phenomena in every month; the Naturalist's Diary, explaining appearances in the animal and vegetable kingdom; Sketches of comparative Chronology; the principles of Zoology, &c.

Since the opening of the trade to India, on the 14th April, 1814, to private individuals, upwards of 200 ships, of the burden of 350 tons and upwards, have procured licenses.

#### RUSSIA.

Before the year 1811 the Constitution of Russia was an *absolute autocracy*; but at that period the Emperor Alexander declared that it should be in future a constitutional monarchy; and that the will of the sovereign should be regulated by a code of laws.—The government is composed of, 1. The Senate of the Empire, which in 1811 was composed of thirty-five members; 2. Of the Directing Senate, as the superior authority; 3. Of the Holy Directing Senate; and, 4. Of the High Ministers.—The revenues of the State in 1811 were 215,000,000 rubles. The expenses were the same year 274,000,000. The army in 1810 was 621,155 men; of which 110,000 were irregular troops. The navy in 1803 comprised 269 sail of different sizes, carrying 4348 guns; 32,046 sailors; 8,268 marines; and 4000 gunners. The established religion is the Greek, which reckons four metropolitan churches; eleven archbishoprics; nineteen bishoprics; 26,747 churches, and a great number of convents.—In 1811 there were estimated of the following persuasions, 3,500,000 Catholics; 1,400,000 Lutherans; 3,800 Reformed Protestants; 9,000 of the Unitas Fratrum, or Moravians; 5,000 Memnonites; 60,000 Armenians; 3,000,000 Mohammedans; 300,000 worshippers of the Dalai Lama; 600,000 adorers of Fetiches, or idols, &c. &c.

#### CHINA.

The embassy to China, headed by Lord Amherst, arrived at Macao early in July last, whence, in a few days, he proceeded to Peking. His lordship had received a very favourable letter from the Emperor.

#### CEYLON.

The following is an extract of a letter from the Hon. Sir Alexander Johnston, the Chief Justice of Ceylon, to a friend in this country, dated Colombo, 22d July, 1816.

"I have, for the last ten years of my residence in Ceylon, been endeavouring, as I believe I have often mentioned to you, to get the principal proprietors of slaves on the island to fix a day after which all children born of their slaves



shall be considered as free. My endeavours have at last, as you will see by the enclosed papers, been attended with success. I wrote on the 10th of this month a letter (of which No. I. is a copy) upon the subject, to the principal proprietors of slaves at this place who are upon the list of the special jurymen for the province of Colombo, and who are therefore all personally known to me. By the letter of which No. II. is a copy, you will see that the proposal contained in my letter was well received by them; and that they, at a General Meeting, which they called to take the contents of that letter into consideration, unanimously came to the resolution, that all children born of their slaves after the 12th of August next should be free;—(the 12th of August was fixed upon by them at my suggestion, as a compliment to the Prince Regent.) They afterwards appointed a committee, from among themselves, to frame certain resolutions (No. III.), for the purpose of carrying their benevolent intention into effect. The principal object of these resolutions is, as you will perceive, to secure that the children, born free after the 12th of August next, shall be provided for by the masters of their parents until the age of fourteen; it being supposed that after they have attained that age they will be able to provide for themselves.

“The Dutch special jurymen of this place consist of about 130 of the most respectable Dutch gentlemen of the place; in which number are contained almost all the Dutch who are large proprietors of slaves. Besides these gentlemen, there are

jurymen of all the different casts among the natives, such as Vellales, fishermen, men of the Mahabadde or Cinnamon department, Chittees, and Mahomedans. The moment the jurymen of these casts heard of the resolution which had been come to by the Dutch special jurymen, they were so much struck with the example which they had set them, that they also immediately addressed me in the same manner as the Dutch had done; announcing their unanimous acquiescence in the measure which had been adopted by the Dutch, and their unanimous determination to consider as free all children that may be born of their slaves, after the 12th of August.

“No. IV. is a copy of the answer which I sent to the address which was presented to me on the occasion by the Dutch special jurymen; and No. V. a copy of that which I returned to the respective addresses which were sent me by all the jurymen of the different casts of natives at Colombo.

“The example of the jurymen at Colombo, is, I understand, to be immediately followed by all the jurymen on the island. You will, I am sure, be delighted to hear of this event. The state of domestic slavery, which has prevailed in this island for three centuries, may now be considered at an end.”

It appears, from the accompanying documents referred to above, that this great change was brought about, in no small degree, by the effect produced on public opinion by the perusal of the Reports of the African Institution, particularly the Eighth and Ninth.

## LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

### THEOLOGY.

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plification of Public Creeds, a Sermon preached at the Triennial Visitation of the Bishop of Rochester, by Richard Lawrence, LL. D., &c. 1s.

Sermons on the Parables of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; by William Martin Trinder, L. B. at Oxford, and M. D. at Leyden. 8vo. 12s.

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A Translation of the Six Books of Proclus on the Theology of Plato; also a Translation of Proclus's Elements of Theology; by Thomas Taylor. 2 vols. royal 4to. 250 copies only printed. 5l. 10s.

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An elementary Treatise on Astronomy; by the Rev. A. Mylne, A. M. 8vo. 9s.

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

### SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY FOR IRELAND.

THIS Society was formerly called the Hibernian Sunday-School Society, and by that name its proceedings already stand recorded in our pages (vol. for 1814, p. 845, and vol. for 1815, p. 865) Its Sixth Report, for the year ending April 1816, has recently reached us, and it conveys the gratifying intelligence of increasing prosperity and extended usefulness. Its funds have been aided by various other societies. From the British and Foreign Bible Society it has received 5000 Testaments and 500 Bibles, at half the cost price; and from two sermons preached in Dublin, one by the Rev. Robert M'Ghee, the other by the Rev. James Dunn, it received 452l. The Committee have printed 20,000 Alphabets and 20,000 Spelling-books No. 1, in the course of the year. They expect to be under the necessity of printing an edition of 30,000 Spelling-books No. 2. At the beginning of the year, the number of schools deriving aid from the Society was 252; containing 28,598 children. At the close of the year the number is 335 schools, containing 37,590 children. The Committee, in recording, in appropriate terms, their obligations, and the obligations of Ireland, to the conductors and teachers of these schools, who have had many difficulties to contend with, observe—

“There are upwards of 2000 individuals, who, anxious to promote the happiness of their poor neighbours, devote a part of their valuable time on Sundays to their instruction; and do so without any other reward than that heart-felt satisfaction which ever attends benevolent exertions. Your Committee cannot avoid considering this gratuitous instruction as one of the peculiar advantages of the Sunday-school

Christ. Observ. No. 181.

system, and one of the causes which renders its effects so very beneficial. Such teachers feel a parental affection to the children; and this is returned by a filial affection from the children: a strong and beneficial union is thus formed between the orders of society. Thus are provided a number of sincere friends, who will protect the children in after-life; by whose advice they may be directed; by whose assistance they may be guarded against many evils; whose good opinion they will be anxious to retain, and will be restrained from faults to which those are exposed, who have not so strong an inducement to maintain their character. Nor is it only the children who are benefited by this connexion; the teachers themselves learn how to teach; they become acquainted with the dispositions of children; they acquire a facility of interesting and instructing them, and become more qualified to educate their own families.

“Your Committee cannot but exult in the progress of a work so fraught with blessings to all engaged in it, so calculated to remedy many of those evils which affect Ireland, and to impart to her peasantry the principles of social order, domestic happiness, and true religion. While under the conviction that this success of your Society has been the result of a concurrence of several independent causes; of the desire of the people for instruction; of the zeal and energy of those who have undertaken to instruct them, and of the patronage and assistance of the public; your Committee would fervently and gratefully ascribe their prosperity to His blessing, from whom all good counsels and just works do proceed; and would, with humble confidence, commit their cause to His care, trusting that He will perfect the same to His own glory.

I

and the happiness of many of the rising generation of our countrymen."

The Appendix contains no less than seventy-six different letters from the teachers of Sunday Schools to the Committee. Many of them are highly interesting, as marking the progress of instruction, and its beneficial effects. We can only give a few very brief extracts.

1. *Derrygonelly*.—"I enclose for the consideration of the Sunday-school Committee, a Report of a school lately established in this parish. It gives a proof that the poor are ready to hear and receive instruction, if there can be any found to concern themselves for them. The harvest is great, and labourers are few.

"The neighbourhood of Derrygonelly, proverbially devoted to every species of folly and idleness on the Lord's day, will now, through the Divine blessing, hear the feeble voice sounding its Maker's praise, and thus correct the grey head of iniquity. No religious distinction has yet prevented the attendance of the teachers and scholars: all co-operate in the same blessed cause; all pray that you may be their successful advocate in obtaining a small grant for building a school-house."

2. *Killyscolean*.—"I have been much interested in the fate of one boy who came to us in 1812: he was then sixteen years old, and had never learned his letters. He continued to attend very regularly, (although he lived more than three miles from the school,) both winter and summer, until last month, when he died, after a short illness, brought on, I fear, by over fatigue. He had read through the Testament, and shewed considerable knowledge of the essential truths of the Gospel. He was the oldest of a large and very poor family, and was remarkable for his industry and good conduct, as much as for his strong desire of improvement. Such was Robert R.; and if we may without presumption trust that this school was made a blessing to him, how thankful should we be to that Providence who has made us instrumental to so serious a benefit!"

3. *Cookstown*.—"It appears, from our weekly register for the last year, that we have taught 8497 children, and we expect to exceed this number in the present, if spared to see it concluded; and we, with heartfelt gratitude, behold that the good that has arisen from our labour of love has,

and is, producing much more than merely to learn the scholars their letters, to spell, and read; for we see them increasing in cleanliness and order, and, we may add, in the fear of the Lord; and from these views and feelings our hands have been held up thus far. We believe the work to be of God, and to him we look for the blessing."

4. *Dromedy*.—"It is upwards of nine years since I collected a few children, chiefly to shew them the evil of profaning the Lord's day, without any view of either order or discipline. In taking a retrospective view of that period, I have cause to thank Almighty God that I engaged in such a work. Many who came to the Dromedy Sunday School since that time, ignorant of God and his word, do make it now the rule of their faith and practice. To God be all the glory given! Our school has been in a thriving state, in every sense, this year; and, although we labour under many inconveniences, which other schools are relieved from that are more warmly patronized by men of affluence and ability, yet God's word is read, and partly understood, by our scholars; and we hope that our public labours will not prove abortive."

5. *Collesno*.—"On the whole, I humbly trust, that the work of God is prospering among the poor; and though one might reasonably conclude, that the effects of your exertions would be rather remote in their operation, and that their fruits would not be fully apparent for another generation, yet even now I think you have great reason to be grateful to Him who giveth the increase, that he has already ripened some of your fruits to maturity. I have seen some comfortable testimonies of sick and dying children, that through the means of Sunday-school instruction they have been able to cast anchor within the veil; and some of them, whose parents have been negligent in attending Divine service, have reminded me of my own duty, by requesting that I would speak to their father and mother."

6. *Maryborough*.—"It is ten years since the school was first opened. Some of our first scholars have arrived to the age of twenty, and twenty-one; they are now some of our best teachers: some of them are scattered through the kingdom; and we have reason to be thankful that they evidence, by their attachment to the Sunday-school institution, that they have not been taught in vain. We have sent from this institution, at different times, teachers into



the different parts of the kingdom ; and we are thankful that their moral conduct has not been a reproach to the Gospel of Christ. They are useful members of society ; and this we can affirm, that most of the boys taught in our school, who have grown to man's estate, give evidence in their life that they fear and love God. This is the Lord's work, and he shall have all the glory. Our wish is for the spread and increase of such institutions, because ignorance and darkness flee before them."

7. *Bangor*.—"The improvement of the children in morals, learning, and appearance, has been rapidly progressive ; and it is very apparent the utility of the institution is become so evident, that many contribute to its support now, that at first refused that assistance. There is also reason to believe, that the example of the children has had a good effect on the conduct of their parents ; as in six months I had no occasion to take a single examination against any inhabitant of Bangor. Formerly they were numerous. It is possible I may err as to the cause (as there are several institutions in Bangor calculated to promote industry and good conduct,) but such is the fact ; and while other parts of the country suffer nocturnal outrages, this parish is, at present, blessed with peace and tranquillity."

"I find that thirteen pence a year for each scholar is, on an average, fully sufficient (the teachers acting gratuitously) to supply them with books, and to pay all other expenses."

#### ANTIGUA.

In the year 1809, the late Bishop Porteus addressed to West-India proprietors and planters, a letter, recommending that the young slaves should be taught to read, and be instructed in the principles of religion.

A printed copy of this letter was sent to Mr. Gilbert, resident at English Harbour, by the Rev. Mr. Curtin. Mrs. Gilbert having been engaged, some years before, in instructing young Negroes, when resident upon her father's estate, felt a strong desire to recommence a practice which appeared to her to promise much for the rising generation ; but was discouraged from the attempt, by the consideration that some of the proprietors or their attorneys considered teaching slaves to read as an impolitic measure ; and it was therefore rather to be expected, that whoever attempted it would be viewed in an unfavour-

able light. On this account she hesitated ; till, one day, the Rev. Mr. Light, a missionary of the United Brethren, calling upon her, and observing that there was a great field for the instruction of children in English Harbour and its vicinity, his remark kindled in her a fresh desire to attempt their instruction. She accordingly made a beginning, in Oct. 1809, aided by her sister Mrs. Thwaites, formerly her coadjutress in the like undertaking in the country, and by another female friend.

The number of children gradually increased ; and, in 1812, they amounted to twenty-eight slaves, thirty free Black and Coloured, and four White. A weekly meeting was then commenced, for the religious instruction of the children, by explaining the Church Catechism, and by other methods suited to their capacities and situation. This meeting is conducted by the Superintendent of the Girls' School, and two other female teachers, and is now held on Wednesday mornings.

In the year 1812, a very seasonable supply of Bibles and Testaments, sent out by the Hon. Mrs. (now Lady) Grey, was presented to the schools, and, since that time, her Ladyship has felt much interest in the success of this institution, which she has furnished with books and lessons. That lady's benevolence has also been exercised in raising a sum of money for the purpose of erecting a school-house ; but some circumstances have occurred, which have hitherto frustrated her Ladyship's kind intentions.

The number of children at present belonging to the Girls' School, is, thirty slaves, one hundred and fifteen free Black and Coloured, and two White. The country schools belonging to the English-harbour School Society were instituted by Mr. Thwaites, and comprise children from twenty estates, five hundred in number. The Boys' School at English Harbour consists of seventy-two boys, superintended by Mr. Mead. In the Girls' School are twelve Teachers ; in the Boys' School, four ; and in the Country Schools, twelve.

The situation of the children at English Harbour, especially the females, excites much interest and compassion in those who are engaged for their good. The greater part of them are the illegitimate offspring of White men, principally in the Navy and Army, who have been from time to time on this station. One of these girls is a

natural daughter of the late lord Falkland, and is still a slave, and likely to suffer all the disadvantages arising from that state, to persons of her description : she is among those whose hearts appear to be touched by Divine Grace, and feels sensibly the evils of her condition. The greater number of these girls live with their mothers ; who are, for the most part, sunk in sin, poverty, and wretchedness ; and they daily witness scenes, the most improper and shocking that can well be conceived. Some of them are as white as the fairest Europeans ; and, enfeebled by hunger and the heat of the climate, are not able to engage in laborious employments. Were they, indeed, ever so willing to work, they would find it difficult, or impossible, to obtain employment, as the system of slavery shuts the door against their being employed as household-servants. A White girl, who belonged to the Sunday School, has, however, obtained a place, and is gone to service.

If these girls determine on leading a virtuous life, they have therefore no other prospect than great poverty and contempt : while a life of unchastity, to which they have constant solicitations after the age of fourteen or fifteen years, holds out to them the advantages of a liberal supply of all their wants. If they are slaves, it opens to them the prospect of emancipation for themselves, and sometimes for their mothers ; and, if they are already free, it promises them the accumulation of a small property, and the possession of a handsome wardrobe, together with a flattering degree of respect from their associates. These advantages on the side of vice are often realized, though their duration is always precarious, and in this part of the island peculiarly so ; but they almost universally terminate with the decay of personal appearance, or the incumbrance of children.

Notwithstanding the powerful temptations to vice which this striking contrast affords, it is a most encouraging circumstance that seven of the girls in the English-harbour Sunday School, from the age of fourteen to twenty years, have determined "to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

There are some orphans in the school who live with their relations ; and, *being free Black and Coloured people, they are not allowed any parochial relief.* These relations are wholly dependent upon their own

exertions, which, after all, often prove insufficient for their own support in health : but when sickness occurs, with its attendant increase of expenses and incapacity for labour, some of them are reduced to the greatest possible distress. Unless these people have a strong principle of faith in God, it cannot therefore be expected that they should resist the temptations which surround them, to dispose of those orphans, according to the prevailing custom of the country, as concubines to men who are able to provide them with food and raiment, and to put it in their power to relieve their distressed relations.

Sunday, Oct. 1st, 1815, being the Sixth Anniversary of the English-harbour Sunday Schools, was celebrated as a day of thanksgiving. Notice of the design having been given by the Superintendents, more than 200 children and young persons assembled, between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, attended by their teachers. As president of the institution, Mr. Dawes addressed the children in an affectionate manner ; and particularly called their attention to the great blessing vouchsafed them, in the establishment of a Sunday School in the neighbourhood where vice and ignorance had so long and so mightily prevailed. He commended several young women who were among the first objects which it embraced ; and who, having derived benefit from it themselves, were desirous of imparting it to others, and with this view had become teachers in the school. He expressed a hope that their example would stimulate others—pointed out those things which he thought likely to be injurious to them, and to defeat the good effect of the exertions made in their behalf—strongly recommended reading the Scriptures with prayer, obedience to parents, and to all the precepts inculcated in the Bible, with the practice of industry, frugality, and chastity. The address was followed by a hymn ; after which tickets were distributed. Four Field Negroes received the highest tokens of approbation ; and several children under six years of age were rewarded with inferior tickets. A little girl just turned of six received one of the first class. She is a very interesting child, reads prettily in the Bible, and was so anxious to have one of her own, that she eagerly brought to the Superintendent, for the purpose of purchasing one, various small sums obtained from her friends at different times. A Bible Association is formed in the school ; and the collection, in one month, amounted to 23s. The num



her of tickets distributed among the girls on this occasion exceeded sixty: the boys had only seventeen among them, they having for some time declined greatly in attendance; though, latterly, they had become more regular. The 100th Psalm was sung after the distribution of the tickets, and the meeting closed with prayer. A plain cake and an orange were given to each child at going away; and, excepting the disappointment experienced by some who had not received tickets, great and general satisfaction seemed to be inspired by this observance of the day.

On the day after the anniversary, a girl, about ten years of age, who is the illegitimate daughter of an officer in the army by a very depraved woman, came to Mrs. Thwaites, earnestly entreating to be permitted to live with her. Her grandmother, mother, and two sisters, are sunk into the lowest depths of disease, poverty, and wretchedness; though two of them are under twenty years of age. She had not even decent clothes to attend the school in. She was so urgent with her mother to give her up, that the unhappy woman came to Mrs. Thwaites, and professed her willingness to do so.

Another girl, much about the same age, is both fatherless and motherless; and lives with an aunt, who is experiencing in her own person such wretched effects of a life of prostitution, that she is desirous of having her niece brought up in habits of chastity and industry; and for this purpose, wished to board her with one of the teachers in the Sunday School. As the poor woman, however, had not the means of paying for the girl's board, or even schooling, and the teacher herself is in indigent circumstances, the girl must be abandoned to the miseries which surround her, if she be not rescued by means of the institution.

These two instances are selected out of many others, as most recent and striking.

From a communication just received from Mr. Dawes, by the Committee of the Church Missionary Society, it appears that the schools continue to prosper. The males amount to about 100; the females to 165, although twenty-one of these have left the school with credit within the last six months, several of whom are at service in respectable and creditable families. Three

have been rescued from situations of great moral danger, at their own and their friends' earnest entreaty; and are placed with young women of good character, where they are learning to get a creditable subsistence by the needle. These three are now under the protection of a Female Society, lately formed, called the "Female Refuge."

A paper, describing the nature and purposes of that society, was to be sent to every family in the island which has female inmates; for no male subscriber is to be admitted.

A similar institution was formed in St. John's, on the 25th of September last. The proposal originated with a few pious young women of Colour; and was so favourably received by other respectable women of the same class, that thirty-two were present at the formation, and subscribed liberally. The number has since increased considerably: and the Society promises to be the instrument of much good. It is called "The Distressed Females' Friend."

Mr. Dawes having recommended the appointment of Mr. James Bates, as assistant catechist and school-master, his recommendation has been adopted. This worthy man has been long a zealous promoter of the schools, and of every plan which tended to advance the glory of God. His pity was awakened by the many poor Black and Coloured children of his neighbourhood, who could not procure even a rag to cover their nakedness, and who consequently could not be admitted into the school, though some of them were extremely anxious to learn: it was sometime since discovered that he had been in the habit of quietly and privately getting into his house a few of these children at a time, and teaching them to read. Having been discharged, in consequence of the reduction of the establishments, from his office as one of the Store-porters in the Dock-yard, he was about to quit the neighbourhood, but will now be retained in the service of the Society.

Beside the Sunday School which Mr. Dawes found established before his arrival at English Harbour, he has opened an early school, at six o'clock on Sunday morning, for the religious instruction of men and youths—a Monday evening school, for catechising men and youths; and for teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic—and a

Thursday evening school, for men only, in which they are catechised, and taught to read. Mrs. Dawes has also opened a Thursday evening school, for the instruction of females.

The Church Missionary Society, beside the appointment of Mr. Bates as assistant to Mr. Dawes, have placed 100*l.* at Mr. Dawes's disposal, in furtherance of the education of the poor children around him; and will continue or modify this grant annually, according to circumstances.

The above account of the English-harbour Schools (which we have taken from the Missionary Register, it appears from the same work) has awakened much interest in several benevolent persons in different quarters, to render some assistance to the poor females whose case is so affectingly described. Presents of clothing, adapted to the climate and to the situation of these poor girls, would, doubtless, be very acceptable. Books suitable for female children and youth might be added. Any presents of this nature, made up in packages, and addressed to the care of Mr. William Dawes, Antigua, if sent to the Church Missionary House, Salisbury-square, would be forwarded by the first opportunity.

A letter from Mr. Dawes, dated Jan. 18, 1816, states, "that the Country Schools present a most interesting scene to those who advocate the moral and religious improvement of this degraded portion of mankind. Several of the scholars now read the Testament well, and many others have improved beyond reasonable expectation; but their progress would doubtless have been much greater, had it not been impeded by the want of teachers. Some of those who, of necessity, have been appointed teachers can only read three or four syllables; and one, who is the most zealous and efficient of all, does not know his letters! This man, having several children who can read, assembles a number in his hut, and provides candle; and, while his children actually teach, preserves order, and stimulates the scholars to exertion.

"The importance of promoting these schools struck me so forcibly, that I determined on visiting them every Sunday, when not prevented by some insuperable impediment.

"The good effect of the schools is now acknowledged by many of the planters, although at first much opposition was excited. Three young women have been put to creditable service within a month past (now five in all) from the English-harbour

School; and three have been regularly married from it within the last three years, and live creditably. Prior to 1803, such a circumstance as a Black or Coloured young woman in this neighbourhood MARRYING had, I believe, never occurred; but now there are twenty one of this description, ALL living creditably, and some respectably, and exhibiting a striking contrast, in the comfort and regularity which prevail in their families, to the misery and wretchedness so common among those of the opposite character. From the Country Schools seven young women have already been regularly married, and, with only one exception (in which case a degree of compulsion was exercised by the girl's parents,) do credit to the state."

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"If the Committee of the Church Missionary Society should think fit to turn their attention this way, I think they could hardly serve the cause of truth more effectually than by sending hither one or two pairs of assistant catechists, married people, of genuine piety, adequate zeal, and sober chastised tempers; who, though strongly attached to the Church of England from principle, could endure to see Moravians and Methodists earnestly and successfully labouring in the same grand cause with themselves.

"These assistant catechists must be of our own country. The Negroes cannot at all understand English spoken with a foreign accent. Besides, these catechists will have to teach the Negroes to read English; and their own present barbarous pronunciation is alone a sufficient impediment to that important work.

"It would be well if the man were acquainted with some useful trade. His wife should, at least, be a good housewife and needle-woman; and if a plain mantua-maker, so much the better. If she also possessed the qualification of a good tender sympathizing nurse, it would greatly attach the female Negroes to her."



## VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

THE distress caused by the deficiency of the last harvest appears to be still more severely felt throughout a great part of the Continent, and particularly in France, the Netherlands, and Savoy, than in this country. The difficulties, arising partly from this source, which France has experienced both in victualling the foreign armies quartered in that country, and in furnishing the stipulated pecuniary contributions to the allies, are said to have induced the latter to consent to a considerable reduction in the number of their troops. The French government has also been reduced to the necessity of negotiating a loan of about twelve millions in foreign countries; and it is confidently reported that the houses of Barings of London and Hopes of Amsterdam have agreed to furnish this large sum by instalments, and on terms which will make the annual interest upon it equal to about 11 per cent. In consequence of the general credit given to this report, the French funds have risen about 7 or 8 per cent. This seems to indicate a growing confidence in the stability of the existing government.—That government is supported by a decided majority in both the legislative houses, who have acquiesced in the measures of finance proposed by ministers, and have adopted also their plan for the future regulation of the elections of the members of the chamber of deputies. By this plan the elective franchise is vested exclusively in persons paying taxes to the amount of 300 francs or about 12*l*. sterling annually, and who have attained the age of thirty. If it be true that the number of electors under this new law will not exceed 100,000 for all France, the qualification may perhaps be considered as too high.—A law has likewise been passed, legalizing, under certain circumstances, voluntary endowments for the support of ecclesiastical establishments.

On the 4th of December, the Congress of the United States commenced its session at Washington. The Message of the President enters at considerable length into the various relations, foreign and domestic, of the American Government. The produce of the harvest had been scanty, but still sufficient for their wants, and the year had been healthy. In the midst of the advantages of returning peace,

a depression is experienced in some branches of manufactures, and by a portion of their navigation; the latter arising from their exclusion from the colonial possessions of Great Britain; and he suggests the adoption of such countervailing measures as may be consistent with a regard to the friendly relations of the two countries and the interests of the United States. The United States are in amity with foreign powers. Occurrences have taken place in the Gulph of Mexico, which have made it necessary to demand explanations from the Spanish Government, which it is hoped will prove satisfactory. The Indian tribes are disposed to remain at peace. The re-organization of the militia, the fixing of one uniform standard of weights and measures, the establishment of an university at Washington, and a comprehensive system of roads and canals, are strongly recommended to the attention of Congress. The President expresses much satisfaction in the concurrent efforts made by other nations to suppress the slave trade; and he invites Congress to adopt measures to give fuller efficacy to their own regulations on that subject, and to prevent unworthy citizens from mingling in the slave trade under foreign flags, and from collusively importing slaves into the United States. He recommends also a revision of the judiciary establishment. The revenue is stated to exceed the current demands: at the close of 1816 the surplus is expected to be nine millions of dollars. A currency, however, of equal value, credit, and use, is wanted for the interests of the community, and measures should be taken to provide one. The Bank of the United States has been organized under favourable circumstances. He concludes with announcing his intention of retiring from the public service.

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Thursday evening school, for men only, in which they are catechised, and taught to read. Mrs. Dawes has also opened a Thursday evening school, for the instruction of females.

The Church Missionary Society, beside the appointment of Mr. Bates as assistant to Mr. Dawes, have placed 100*l.* at Mr. Dawes's disposal, in furtherance of the education of the poor children around him; and will continue or modify this grant annually, according to circumstances.

The above account of the English-harbour Schools (which we have taken from the Missionary Register, it appears from the same work) has awakened much interest in several benevolent persons in different quarters, to render some assistance to the poor females whose case is so affectingly described. Presents of clothing, adapted to the climate and to the situation of these poor girls, would, doubtless, be very acceptable. Books suitable for female children and youth might be added. Any presents of this nature, made up in packages, and addressed to the care of Mr. William Dawes, Antigua, if sent to the Church Missionary House, Salisbury-square, would be forwarded by the first opportunity.

A letter from Mr. Dawes, dated Jan. 18, 1816, states, "that the Country Schools present a most interesting scene to those who advocate the moral and religious improvement of this degraded portion of mankind. Several of the scholars now read the Testament well, and many others have improved beyond reasonable expectation; but their progress would doubtless have been much greater, had it not been impeded by the want of teachers. Some of those who, of necessity, have been appointed teachers can only read three or four syllables; and one, who is the most zealous and efficient of all, does not know his letters! This man, having several children who can read, assembles a number in his hut, and provides candle; and, while his children actually teach, preserves order, and stimulates the scholars to exertion.

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A Portuguese force has taken possession of Monte Video, evidently with a view to prosecute thence hostile measures against the newly established Republic of Buenos Ayres. This step we have no doubt has been taken in perfect concurrence with the Spanish Government. In the northern provinces of South America the Independent cause is said to be gaining ground.

In Jamaica, and also in Barbadoes, bills, have, it seems, passed the legislatures for the Registration of their Slaves. How far they will prove efficacious to the end will be seen hereafter. In the mean time, it is clear that these proceedings furnish a valid answer to all the allegations of danger from a Registry of Slaves, which have been so clamorously urged by West-Indians against its adoption.

Parliament is to meet this day (23th January;) and it is expected that from the very first ministers will have to encounter a powerful opposition. We shall not speculate respecting the particular grounds on

which that opposition will be instituted, as so much light is on the point of being thrown on the whole subject. We very sincerely pray that party animosity may give place, at the present crisis, to an earnest and concurrent desire for the public good; and that the deliberations of Parliament may, under the Divine blessing, have the effect of alleviating the prevailing distress, and promoting the permanent peace and prosperity of the country. It is a time when all who have those objects at heart ought cordially to unite their efforts, to preserve their country from the threatened evils of anarchy on the one hand, and on the other to relieve its burdens by every means of practicable retrenchment and judicious reform. The state of our revenue, as compared with our expenditure, it must be admitted, is very discouraging; but we cannot entertain a doubt that it only requires patience, combined with steady exertion, and anxious economy, to raise the country from its present depression, and to disappoint the hopes of the turbulent and disaffected.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A LAYMAN; H. R.; T. B. P.; C. P.; G. P. R. L.; C. I.; ELIZA; B.; KENDALIENSIS; E—S; A LAYMAN, have been received, and will be considered.

A NORTHERN VICAR has strangely assumed that a paper on Novel Reading which appeared in our last Number expresses our own sentiments. No assumption can be more unfounded or unjust. The Northern Vicar regards Novel Reading as a great evil. He will not deny, however, that that evil prevails to a very considerable extent even in what may be called the religious world. Persons of whom he himself thinks well, not only read, but write novels. How is this evil to be met but by a full and fair discussion? Will an *ex-parte* argument convince those persons? Can they be convinced in any way but by combating the strength of their case? If every syllable contained in the letter of our correspondent were correct, we should say that he of all men should desire such a discussion of the subject as has been commenced in our pages. One writer attacks novel reading indiscriminately: we readily admit his communication. Another writer attempts a qualified defence of it; and he is permitted also to speak for himself. Now, let the Northern Vicar take up his pen and refute the arguments of this writer, and he will much more effectually serve the cause of truth, than by the useless act of throwing the paper which contains them into the fire, or by heaping reproaches on the Christian Observer. In that paper are many things from which we dissent; but he must know that it is not our habit to interrupt the course of discussion between correspondents, by remarks of our own. This would scarcely be fair either to them or to ourselves. Instead of writing such a letter as we have received, the Northern Vicar would have better employed his time in calmly and dispassionately pointing out the abuse to which the practice in question is liable, and the guards, restrictions, and limitations under which works of fiction, if permitted at all, should be read.

We will endeavour to find an early place for Mr. JEBB's Reply to Albion.

Our good-humoured FRIEND ought to have read with more attention. We said, not that the Elgin Marbles were open to the public, but that they would soon be. See Christian Observer for December, p. 319.